

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 22, 2026 at 3:28 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Fort St. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As someone who works in community inclusion, supports and food security, I can tell you first hand that these are some of the services that keep community safe, healthy and thriving. I have worked on the front lines for over ten years. I've worked directly with new Canadians, street communities, folks with disabilities and mental health struggles, people with substance use challenges and folks within the carceral system. **More police officers do not equate to a healthier community.** Investment in early childhood, intergenerational relationship building, public infrastructure, community resources, social service supports, food security initiatives and the arts are investments into the public health and safety.

As a musician who has been contracted by the city for events, divesting in the arts by 18% has a huge impact on the culture of our city. It is already incredibly difficult for artists and musicians to thrive and make a living.

As a renter, I ask city council to redirect funds to housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. We are already seeing people move away from Victoria due to the inaccessibility of housing.

Please reflect on how the budget is community-minded and inclusive, and what community you are prioritizing.

The increase to the VicPD is an irresponsible move for the City of Victoria to enact. This proposed budget increase would mean that the VicPD would make up nearly 25% of the 2025 City of Victoria budget.

Please reconsider, the community depends on it.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 5:06 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca, mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

Good day,

The City has asked for feedback regarding the 2026 draft budget, and if I had to sum up my own feelings in one phrase, it would be this: this budget, and the process behind it, is performance art at its worst.

Of course, since I am not required to limit myself to one phrase, I will elaborate...for all the good it is likely to do.

I write with the bitterness of years of experience observing City budgetary deliberations. Every year, at least for as long as I can now remember, the process starts out with "staff" producing a draft which will involve property tax increases stretching into the double digits. At this point mayor and councilors alike huff and puff and declare this quite unacceptable, possibly even a crisis, and vow to "roll up their sleeves" (or some such equivalent) to bring it down to something the weary taxpayers of this city can more likely afford. After vast and heroic efforts (which really amount to just nibbling away at the edges of spending) the result is something in the high single digits. This is then presented as a victory for fiscal common-sense, for hard-choices in the face of challenging conditions, etc., etc. And thus the drama - really a farce - is concluded for another year.

If that sounds too harsh, how can a taxpayer conclude otherwise? The same pattern has recurred over and over again.

There are many aspects of this draft budget that grate, but one in particular is the artificial distinction made between the "City" budget and the "Police" budget. This is just another aspect of the shell game of City financial management. If anything is a core responsibility of municipal government, surely funding the police department is it. So why the artificial division? To any normal person, it makes no real sense - except as a public relations device to allow the City to pretend that its "own" increase in taxes is only around 5 percent, rather than the 10 percent if Police increases are also taken into account. As it happens, I don't believe that a 5 percent increase to the Police budget is justified, either; but if it is, then commensurate reductions should be made elsewhere in the "City" budget to fund it.

Over and over again, and for many years past, those running this city have confused "wants" with "needs". The Youth Bus Pass Program (over \$600,000) is an example: it should not be the responsibility of city taxpayers (the vast majority of whom rarely if ever set foot on a bus) to directly subsidize free bus passes for anyone, especially as those same taxpayers are directly subsidizing the transit service through a share of their CRD taxes anyway. Meanwhile, it is no doubt to be applauded that the "Victoria Music Strategy" continues to be zero-ed out, at least for another year, but so many of these other "grants" remain absurdly high, and suspiciously vague. \$710,310 continues to be earmarked for "Other Grants": what could those be, I wonder? And then there are the "Direct Award Grants" which have actually increased this year, to nearly 3.4 million dollars. The library budget is increasing by half a million, nearly 8.8 percent. How can this be justified, at least if we are supposed to take seriously the protestations by our Council that it really is concerned to limit the burdens added to taxpayers year over year? Corporate equipment replacement continues to require a budget of \$245,000. That's a lot of desks and chairs. Of course that's nothing compared to the Victoria Police Department, whose "Furniture and Fixtures" need a \$400,000 infusion this year and as far the eye can see in coming years. And if all this new furniture does not suffice to keep the City running smoothly, fear not: the "Corporate Workplace Modernization Program" has also been allocated \$474,000 this year, not to mention escalating increases far out into the end of the decade and beyond.

And seriously, how can anyone believe that this city government really believes in fiscal responsibility when it cannot even bring itself to forbear funding "Communications and Engagement" to the tune of \$2.7 million. On the other hand, I suppose if they didn't we would have no idea about all of the

\$2.7 million. On the other hand, I suppose if they didn't we would have no idea about all of the fantastic "Art, Culture and Events" which continue to gobble up a tidy \$1.4 million this coming year - nor the additional "Special Events" which somehow demand another half a million bucks, let alone the "Cultural Infrastructure Grants" (a tidy quarter million).

It is easy to say (and will no doubt be argued by some) that individually all these examples would not make too decisive a difference. But the fact that they are budgeted as they are tends to give the lie to the notion that this Council really cares about the money entrusted to it by the taxpayers of this city, let alone has the strength to deal with bigger-ticket items where major savings might well be made. My eye is caught by the \$5 million a year for vehicle and heavy equipment replacement, not just this coming year, but with equal or escalating increases scheduled for years to come. How many of these vehicles are being replaced prematurely in the dogmatic pursuit of electrification, rather than as a result of true obsolescence?

And finally, a Council genuinely concerned about saving money would probably hesitate a bit more before allowing their own compensation to rise by 8.41 percent.

It's time for this city to get real, about what we NEED versus what we might like, or what might be nice, or what, if we were starting a city from scratch, we might prefer.

In that spirit, I look forward, always with hope but sadly without any real confidence, to the next stage of your budget deliberations.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:24 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Cordova Bay Road. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived mental health and substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs. As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Budget Feedback
Date: December 12, 2025 at 4:56 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

I am writing with respect toward the budget city council has proposed and would like to offer feedback.

Overall, I am happy with the direction that council has taken when it comes to prioritizing items, and am glad for example that the centennial square revitalization was scrapped, in favor of more worthwhile expenditures.

That being said, an area of concern for me is the increased police budget. I can certainly understand operating expenditures and won't argue about the salary increases and benefits. However, I am extremely perturbed by the fact that almost half of our tax increase is going toward the police when there was already outcry about this in the last round of budgets. And while cold calls and organizational outreach I'm sure informs council's direction and thinking on this, I think it's also important to note that on community/Victoria oriented groups, the overwhelming majority of people aware of this budget increase are not happy about it, suggesting that many of us interested in community safety, are not feeling as though this is coming from the police.

I believe the excuse last time around was there was no point in arguing the budget as it would go to the police board who would approve it, and then if appealed on further arguments, it would go to the province who would then approve it on their end. And while I understand the logic, I also find it to be a cowardly approach. I understand that we are hampered and the decision making power may ultimately be left outside of council's control, but letting these budgets increase uncritically with only surface-level disagreement is not the correct approach. Council should be pushing back on this issue and letting the appeals fall where they may, rather than be defeatist from the get-go. At some point, in doing this, someone is going to get the message that the city and its citizens are not happy. It is my humble suggestion that you take a hard look at the police expenses, as opposed to a glance and washing your hands of it.

Thank you for your time

From:
Subject: Feedback on 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 6, 2026 at 5:12 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello Counsel,

My name is _____ and I have lived in Victoria for 32 years. I am providing my feedback as a citizen, and a community leader within the arts. I am disabled, queer, non-binary, Filipinx, and have experienced more racism and discrimination than I can account for over my lifetime in Victoria.

The 5.02 per cent increase requested from VicPD is **absolutely absurd**. The police department in Victoria have a long documented history of discrimination, anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, racial profiling, and physical assault of citizens peacefully protesting. They have shown time and time again they protect property, not people, and every bit of research points to the healthiest communities having little to no police presence/budget.

VicPD have been stealing belongings and shelters of unhoused people throughout the city and I have seen little action on supporting the folks that have been scapegoated by this entire community. I think we should be ashamed of the comments that privileged white citizens in Victoria feel emboldened to say about people who are unhoused, so emboldened that they write to the whitest media outlet the times "colonist". I am astonished that this is what Victoria is - a place of such well documented hatred and bigotry where we have dehumanized ourselves to the point where we cannot feel empathy or compassion for other people.

That **entire 5.02 % could be used towards actually housing people and supporting their needs**, rather than funding a violent group of people who willingly became cops, and who benefit from the displacement of this oppressed group of people. They are feeding misinformation to the public about the "dangers" of these folks, when the real danger is the presence of police, their escalation, and their unlawful behaviour with guns swinging on their hips.

People who are unhoused are our NEIGHBORS. Most people in Victoria are one paycheque away from being unhoused, we have more in common with the folks fighting for their lives outside than we do with the overpaid and unregulated VicPD. There is absolutely no reason folks in a city as wealthy as Victoria should be unhoused, and there is absolutely no reason to give almost 50% of a proposed budget increase to the police.

Data like this shows the absolutely exponential amount of money in Canada going towards police SALARIES. Not things that actually keep us safe, their SALARIES. While most people are cobbling together their month to month, hoping our landlords don't evict us.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510005901>

And here is a stat that even google's AI can't scrub from the internet: "Police budgets in Canada are substantial, reaching \$19.7 billion in total operating expenditures in 2022/2023, with salaries, wages, and benefits making up the largest portion (around 83%)."

I do not want my tax dollars going towards the police and their salaries while I struggle to buy groceries. I want my tax dollars to fund housing for all, safe recovery centres, mental health and addictions recovery, disability supports. I want to see city counsellors standing by people who are unhoused and doing everything in their power to support their own autonomy that is stripped from them by police. I want to see a DECREASE of 5.02 % from the police budget and those funds reappropriated to community investments, addressing the cost of living in Victoria, and our collective wellness. 10.04% tax raises going into housing people would change so many peoples lives, rather than affording a police officer a new hot tub. If we could house people when there was a global pandemic (that we are now in year 6 of) then we can do it now.

Please do not raise the police budget in 2026. Please do not give into a narrative that dehumanizes people struggling to survive.

Thank you,

Unceded Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SANEĆ lands

From:
Subject: Feedback on the updated 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 19, 2026 at 7:31 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Fort Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and create a foundation in this city.

As a librarian, I work closely with the Victoria community and share concerns about public safety in the city, but I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Fort Street, City of Victoria Resident

Sent with respect from the traditional and ancestral lands of the lək̓ʷəŋən-speaking peoples, and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

My working hours may differ from yours. Please know that I respect boundaries around personal time and hold no expectations that you will respond outside of your working hours.

From:
Subject: Opposition to VicPD budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:07 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ am a Victoria resident living on Wark st, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities especially towards vulnerable populations of people.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being - housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: Robert Kemp robert@familycycles.ca
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget feedback
Date: January 22, 2026 at 10:34 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello

I am writing as a downtown business owner, and a homeowner, in the city of Victoria to fully oppose the budget increase for the Victoria Police Department. This council has failed our most vulnerable in this city and shifted blame to the province who is currently cutting funding to programs across the board. We do not need more cops, we need longer library hours. We do not need more cops, we need more community centres and public spaces. We do not need cops in schools at all, imagine if we gave that \$511,000 (the proposed budget for Victoria Cops in schools) directly to the 3 elementary schools in Victoria doing the social work that the province should be doing. We don't need more cops, we need free transit. We don't need more cops, we need to build the promised downtown park at Romeos--now. We could push so many community building efforts forward with the \$11 million that Vic PD is asking for and we will get none of that and we are talking about cutting funding to important priorities. All of this for what? What tangible outcomes are we promised for this money? Victoria PD is already the most expensive police force per a capita in BC and what positive outcomes have we seen? Why are we the local people cutting our services to militarize our streets? Why are mayor and council not only backing 50% of our tax increase going to Vic PD but also giving them money from the budget on top of what they already receive (1.5 million last summer)? There is no evidence that more money to police has any effect on crime rates. Why do we think that 3-6 months of training and a gun equips someone to solve our most complex social problems? The police are an outdated failed remnant of a colonial past and a tool of an unjust capitalist system, where the poor, traumatized and visible minorities are punished for existing. Policing has not and will never be fair in its current form and if I was able to fund the fight I would withhold the full 20% of my tax dollars that goes to it.

Apart from opposing the police budget increase I would like to see the city petition the provincial government to allow more tax classes created. Should a property owner that owns multiple buildings downtown be able to download the tax straight through to small businesses? Why don't we have a business vacancy tax? Can you imagine if it was more expensive in tax to leave a building empty than it was to take a risk on a local business? We should reward vibrancy and penalize empty and crumbling buildings. Wouldn't it be nice if we as a city could close the tax loopholes that reward loses in a real estate portfolio.

Lastly what happened to coming back to missing middle housing and making it easier to build faster and cheaper in Victoria? This was a core election issue last election, and this council passed the flawed missing middle package with a promise to make it better.

Spend money on making our city more livable and vibrant for all citizens and stop giving money to cops that control the public safety narrative to try to continually grow their force. Police should be incentivized to work so well within a community

that they aren't seen, but instead they are rewarded if their job is done poorly . The worse cops do at "fixing" our societal problems, the more money we give them, how does this make any sense? If approved this year Victoria Police will have received a 52% increase in 5 years and what have they done to earn this? What have they done to make our city better? Clearly nothing or they wouldn't be asking for more money because we wouldn't see a need for them.

I am happy to have a conversation with anyone that is interested as this year's budget sets a very dangerous precedent for the future of our city.

Robert Kemp
Owner
Bishop's Family Cycles
Family Cycling is Revolutionary!



Victoria

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Vancouver

1683 Chestnut St
Vancouver, BC V6J 4M6
Shop +1-604-260-8500

Robert@familycycles.ca | familycycles.ca

From:
Subject: Budget
Date: December 15, 2025 at 11:51 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Once again the city proposes to increase property tax; by over 10%.
My income has not gone up by 10% so where are we supposed to find the extra cash.
The road engineering department has spent, how many millions, making it increasingly impossible to navigate Victoria.
I am 81 and need my car for basic needs.
You have turned Blanshard into a 1 lane street. Fort St. is a nightmare. And Wharf is a death waiting to happen.
The Victoria Police are the SECOND HIGHEST budget per population in BC, and one of the highest in Canada.
Could savings be found by more efficiency?
I'm sick of this city and plan to leave.
Socialists love to spend other people's money till it runs out.
Well I've had enough.
DS

From:
Subject: Draft budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 10:07 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I'm so tired of the municipality engaging in projects that in my mind have nothing to do with a mandate I gave anyone. Parks and rec and streets maintenance and any other housekeeping duties, including the police our priorities for me. all the money being spent on vanity projects and bike lanes and other topics that other levels of government are already dealing with is a waste of money in my view, so Victoria needs to get back to running as a municipality and not some sort of club that caters to all kinds of special interests.

From:
Subject: Feedback on the updated 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 19, 2026 at 7:41 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca, mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Vancouver st. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, designer, and community event organizer, the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% while giving a huge increase to VicPD feels devastating. Victoria is already a very challenging place to grow as an artist and event organizer, and prioritizing the police in next year's budget this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I am also appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that actually address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people food, a warm place to sleep, mental health support, and safe consumption sites.

I want to feel safe in our communities, and I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, but I also know that more police and policing is not what makes us safer, and it certainly does not make things safer for folks who are most impacted by police, such as Black and Indigenous people, people of color, poor people, and immigrants.

I urge Mayor and Council to stop bending to VicPD's demands and instead invest these funds in programs that actually improve our well-being and contribute to a vibrant, thriving community.

I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months as I consider my vote in the 2026 municipal election.

Thank you for your time.

vancouver St. Victoria BC

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 2:31 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

In simple terms proposed 10.44% property tax increase which I assume does not include CRD etc portion is beyond reason. When you consider the increase of residential construction and total assessed tax base the increased tax revenue should provide additional funds needed with a reasonable annual tax increase.

Council should set a annual tax rate consisting of inflation plus a base % not to exceed as example 4%.

I am a long term resident 77 years who has multiple commercial & residential properties all the time being grateful to live in a vibrant inclusive city but unfortunately not last 7 - 10. Putting it bluntly the city has gone into the toilet. Considering all the programs and monies spent, it's total mismanagement of tax monies. I'm appalled.

Victoria BC

Sent from my iPad

From:
Subject: BUDGE I
Date: December 15, 2025 at 10:24 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#) STOP BIKE LANES ESPECIALLY GALLOPING GOOSE UPGRADE. YOU INCOMPETENT IDIOTS. THESE UPGRADES ARE NOT WHAT PEOPLE WANT. JUST AA VERY LOUD GROUP OF 19% OF PUBLIC. YOU MORONS HAVE TO GO BEFORE VICTORIA IS TOTALLY RUINED.

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Input
Date: January 22, 2026 at 3:24 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I recently received the draft budget for the City of Victoria. As I was looking through the increases I noticed a budget line increase for the VicPD of 5.02%. This is in response to the VicPD's request for new offices to continue to implement their, "Community Safety and Wellbeing" program, which describes itself as, "[i]nvesting in proactive and preventative policing initiatives that align with other levels of government to address the root causes of crime, including mental health, addiction, and homelessness. (VicPD Provisional Budget, p.6)"

Given the increased demands on emergency services (Paramedics, Firefighters, and Police), due to complex mental health and substance use issues downtown, there has been much publicised about the idea of Community Safety and Wellbeing. I would ask, community safety and wellbeing for whom?

Increasing the police force does little to support safety and wellbeing for those living unhoused and actively using substances. While the provincial three year pilot program of decriminalization is set to terminate at the end of January, folks that are using will be at even greater risk for arrests, higher incarceration rates, which lead to continued substance use and potential homelessness.

What is needed is a more balanced approach, and I would suggest public funds are diverted away from hiring police officers toward supporting unique targeted programs like that of Car 87 in Vancouver.

Car 87 has been around for decades, and, while there are more needed, the pairing of specific police officers with psychiatric nurses and/or social workers do much to de-escalate situations and build community connections. Not only do I think the program is valuable, but I have witnessed it personally support youth in particular, which has created pathways for street entrenched youth to find greater access to resources, remove themselves from street life, and build connections with adults that are safer and meaningful. By supporting vulnerable youth rather than criminalising them means that there is a future diminishment of street entrenched adults.

Diverting funds away from increased police presence and toward mental health/policing tandems could not only support initiatives of Community Safety and Wellbeing for those who have been outspoken (business owners downtown and residents who fear coming downtown), but also create some greater safety and wellbeing for those who are struggling downtown.

Please consider reorganising the city budget to initiate unique programs that actually support everyone rather than ratcheting up police presence, as this only makes part of our community feel safer.

Thank you.

From:
Subject: Feedback on 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 21, 2026 at 5:04 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Edgeware. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Residing on Edgeware St. in Victoria BC

From:
Subject: 2026 budget
Date: December 15, 2025 at 12:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I'm opposed to increasing property taxes to fund budget increases. We have already seen massive increases the last few years and particularly businesses are already under immense strain.

I think the city should be cutting some staffing and public works projects -- like the intersection expansions and the excessively rapid roll out of all the bike lanes.

fifth st
Sent from my iPhone

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 22, 2026 at 8:02 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi, my name is _____ currently live downtown at Quadra & Fisgard, and have for the past 11 years. I'm strongly opposed to the 14% increase to the VicPD budget. I also strongly oppose the division of the 10% property tax increase, with over half going to support the inflated needs of the Vic PD.

I understand the police are a necessary institution, and I believe those who break the law, should be held accountable. With the upcoming changes to the decriminalization laws in BC, I know there will be a need for police enforcement. I don't however, understand, an increased budget of 14%, in one year, while other areas are cut significantly. I know you've read these numbers many times, but a 52% increased budget for the VicPD from 5 years ago is unjustified.

It's a wild world out there, and all we really have in the end, is our community, which will lack significant vibrancy if you cut down things like community grants (down 8.3%), and Arts & Culture funding (down 18%).

I will say, the driving occurring on our streets as of late is inexcusable. I don't know the logistics of ticketing with the use of red light cameras, but wow, there is some money to be made out there.

Please use the budget to ensure those working essential lower paying jobs can afford to have a roof over their head, and free/affordable access to arts, music, and food. This is the bare minimum for our community members.

Look forward to seeing the official budget!

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 3:42 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed budget for the City of Victoria.

I note that in the initial draft in November 2025 the proposal was to increase municipal taxes by 13.31%. This was made up of the VicPD budget increase resulting in a 5.02 increase in taxes and other civic services resulting in an increase of 8.29%. After further review the other civic service increase has been reduced to a 5.42% increase but VicPD apparently made no changes and remains at the 5.02% level. This results in the current proposal of a municipal tax increase of 10.44%.

I would observe that the average income level in Victoria has not increased by 10% in the past year nor has the inflation rate increased at 10%. It is disappointing to see that council is proposing an inflationary budget far in excess of income and property value increases for citizens. In fact most properties in the city have seen a decline in assessment values in the past year. I would also note that it is disappointing that there was no apparent effort to reduce the police services budget.

Overall I would submit that the council should be entering into a process to reduce the budget increases to the range of 2-3% reflecting general inflationary trends and average income increases for citizens of Victoria. To propose a 10% increase is excessive and is not sustainable in the long term.

On specific items I note some clearly excessive increases in aspects of the budget for both VicPD and the other city services. In the police budget there is a projected 12% increase in overtime expenditures, what is the justification for this? There is also a projected increase in new officers of 17 proposed in the optional budget item. It is not clear to me how 17 new officers are going to make the city any safer. The overwhelming need at this time is for adequate supportive housing for unhoused people living in tents around the city. Focusing police resources on Pandora Street every morning does nothing to address this need and simply forces homeless people to move elsewhere in the city to set up camp.

I also note a 76% increase in police board expenses, a 26% increase in the HR budget and a 142% increase in the general administration budget. Overall VicPD's budget devotes over 40% of expenses to administrative expenditures. Most organizations keep administrative expenses in the 10-20% range. It is incumbent on city council to take its role seriously and impose some fiscal reality on VicPD. Simply agreeing to their annual requests has not improved public safety at all in the past 15 years and all we see is a well-resourced paramilitary response to the needs of those who are on the street suffering from addiction, homelessness and mental health issues.

In respect of the rest of the city budget I note an 80% increase in community safety and bylaw expenditures, 17% on both corporate and strategic real estate expenditures and 16% on legislative services. These expenditures need to be examined closely to determine what is a realistic increase. Although I appreciate that council has worked to try and reduce the proposed budget it is unacceptable to propose a 10% increase in a time of economic hardship for so many living in this city.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: 2026 budget
Date: January 22, 2026 at 5:10 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca, councillors@victoria.ca

I do not support giving VicPD more money so they can harass and denigrate the homeless. I also do not support increasing their budget for these reasons:

- VicPD's total budget is set to rise to \$90 million, and Victoria's share (\$78 million) constitutes almost a quarter of the city's total budget for 2026.
- VicPD costs more per capita than any of B.C.'s other 11 municipal police departments or 67 RCMP municipal units. VicPD wants to push that cost even higher in 2026, to \$750 per person.
- In comparison, the total proposed budget for the Greater Victoria Public Library is \$6.9 million and the budget for all of Parks & Recreation is only \$22.7 million.
- Thanks to advocacy from Victoria Transit Riders Union, the Youth Bus Pass program was saved from the chopping block. However, in order to afford the massive increase to VicPD's budget, the City is proposing **cutting funding** to:
 - Arts, Culture, and Events: **down 18%**
 - Neighbourhoods (which includes supports for neighbourhood associations and community building): **down 4.3%**
 - Climate Action: **down 10%**
 - Citywide Planning (which includes developing and implementing policies for affordable housing, tenant assistance, and equity initiatives): **down 8.4%**
 - The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: **down 3.1%**
 - Community Grants: **down 8.3%**
- Meanwhile, the proposed budget for bylaw services has gone up from \$5.4 million to \$9.7 million, an 80% increase!
- Furthermore, in order to meet VicPD's demands, the city is proposing a property tax increase of 10.44%, *half* of which is just for the police.

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 1:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I am unhappy with proposed increase to the police budget. How much longer are we going to continue to fund police at that level without seeing meaningful results. Other departments were able to find cost savings year after year but not the police?

Police need greater accountability and metrics that are not overseen by their own departments. How does it make sense that the police police themselves?

Community planning should have additional resources. They've made actual meaningful changes to the design of the city in the form of greater quality public spaces and high-quality urban design. They often find creative and affordable ways to make the city a better place (unlike the police).

Please consider revisions to the budget along the lines of the above.

Thank you,

From:
Subject: Budget input
Date: December 15, 2025 at 1:21 PM
To: Legislative Services email legislativeservices@victoria.ca

It just can't continue. 10.44% is insanity. You need to CUT. We need to run more efficiently. Fix the pot holes, make sure there is water and sewer. Basically that is it. We will talk about fire and police in a minute. Don't assess efficiency internally, have it done from efficiency experts that are outside the pod. Even the grumpy taxpayers could go through and find millions of dollars of waste. I am not suggesting you use grumpy taxpayers to do efficiency audits - it was just an example of the waste anyone outside the system would see.

I love fire and police. We need safe streets. But talk about inefficiencies; off the dial. I know they are sacred cows but there is no way any towns or cities can survive 35 or 40% of the budget going to police and fire. There are some cops that do absolutely nothing, no crown reports no arrests, nothing, and still earn 120k per year, Before OT. You need to go thru and get rid of those officers that do nothing and/ or cannot do the job any longer. But mainly You need to civilianize. A 30 dollar an hour civilians can go and take a property report, stolen bike report or a b n e report. They can even throw some finger print dust around. We can no longer afford a 200k a year officer doing it. A civilian can book in property, be a major crime management (paper work) specialist and so on and so forth. An army of security officers doing rounds with the mandate of observe, report and record -can call police. Police driving around on 'patrol' is almost a waste of time as they are no longer allowed to do 'Street checks' and if you look at self generated files, arrests and crown reports, you will find it is next to nothing. An army of security driving around would be a fraction of the costs and be high profile. You still have police there ready for the calls they need to go to. You need to think of a completely new model (but no one will). We can't sustain the \$ anymore. Speaking of new models, the bar is so low for fire depts it is actually funny. Except that they are not using horses anymore they basically do the same thing they did over 100 years ago. Answer calls from their sleepy beds. We cannot afford to have a large group of employees sitting around watching sports, cooking, working out and sleeping - we just can't do it. Fire depts saw the writing on the wall many years ago and switched from just fire to fire and rescue to pad stats. Nine times out of ten they are a waste at a car accident (we need more ambulances) , they rarely, rarely go to fires, their fire prevention stuff is a joke and should go to civilians as should many other things they adopted to pad their stats. This 'fire halls have to be x distance from the scenes' and min manning on fire engines are two of the biggest scams going. I don't know the best fire model but 1 suv with 2 decently hard working ppl in it could probably cover 70 % of the calls in Victoria that the fire dept ACTUALLY really need to go to. Again, you need to look at the model and have courage. It isn't that you, or me, don't support safety and safe streets it is the models are outdated, have grown into these monstrosities and we just can't do it anymore.

BTW, If you want safer streets get Crown to take the charges and get judges to hold repeat offenders in custody.

...and repeat the exercise in class.

Thank you

Victoria resident.

From:
Subject: 2026 draft budget feedback
Date: January 22, 2026 at 5:30 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

We should absolutely not be increasing the police budget. That is a complete waste of our tax dollars. We need housing and funding for helping unhoused people and not policing them. Policing the unhoused does not help them and it certainly doesn't help someone like me who is struggling to remain housed with the out of control rents in this city.

Thanks!

ntario st
Victoria BC

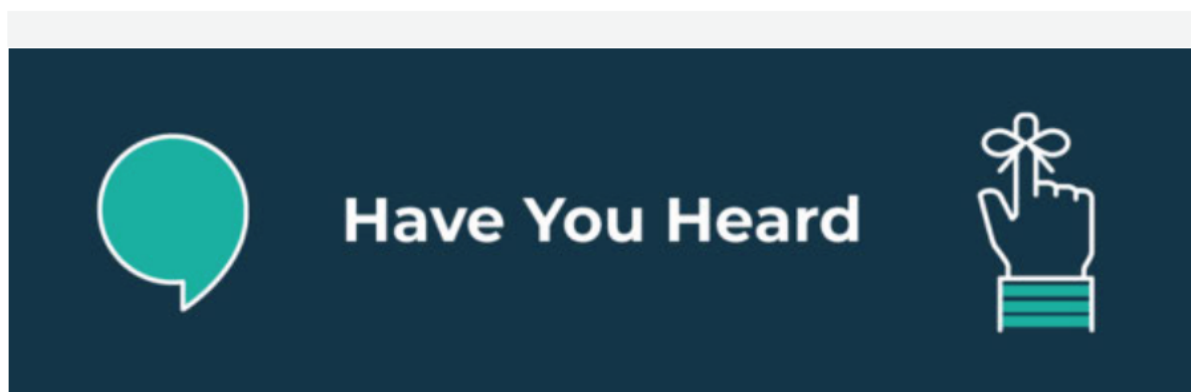
Sent from my iPhone

From: Engagement-External engage@victoria.ca
Subject: FW: Have You Heard Newsletter - January 2026
Date: January 13, 2026 at 10:48 AM
To: Legislative Services email LegislativeServices@victoria.ca

From:
Sent: January 13, 2026 10:29 AM
To: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Subject: Re: Have You Heard Newsletter - January 2026

It is all one budget and find it insulting that because council can't fiscally manage the city over the last four years, the city resorts to marketing semantics. The police budget is part of the city by budget and most of the cost increases are a result of poor council decisions on dealing with the problems downtown. A 30% plus increase in property taxes over the last four years is extremely unreasonable and out of touch with residents.

On Tue, Jan 13, 2026, 10:21 City of Victoria <engage@victoria.ca> wrote:



The latest on engagement opportunities and news from the City of Victoria. Read on for updates on current and past engagement projects.

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



2025 DRAFT BUDGET

Public Input Opportunity

2026 Draft Budget

2026 Draft Budget

Based on Council's initial budget deliberations, the City of Victoria's 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (2026 Draft Budget) has been updated and is now ready for public input.

Provide feedback in writing or by pre-recorded video by **January 23** to help inform Council's budget decisions.

A 5.42 per cent tax increase is currently proposed for the City's portion of the budget, investing \$384.1 million in operating costs and \$84.5 million in capital improvements to deliver more than 200 programs and services the community relies on. When combined with the police department's 5.02 per cent increase request, the total proposed tax increase is 10.44 per cent.

All public input will be shared with Council as they work to further reduce the City's portion of the tax increase.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Let's Talk About the Noise Bylaw

Have Your Say About Sound and Noise

We're modernizing the 2003 Noise Bylaw, to make it easier to understand, follow and enforce.

Share your personal or business experiences to help inform an updated Noise Bylaw that balances livability and economic vibrancy in Victoria.

This bylaw sets standards to limit excessive noise from some activities, including construction, industry, hospitality, events and private waste collection. Complete the business or community survey before Jan. 31.

Additional engagement sessions are being held with businesses operating in Victoria.

[LEARN MORE](#)



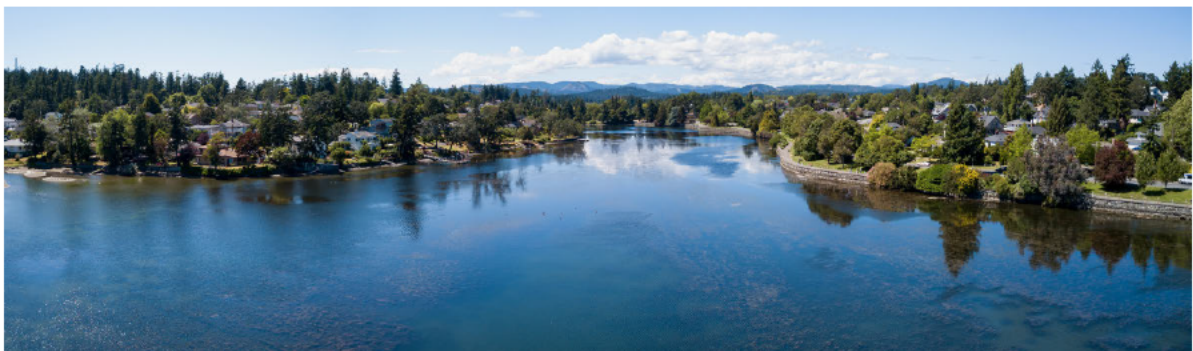
OCP Update Adopted

The Official Community Plan (OCP) for Victoria has been updated to meet the needs of our growing population and address the housing and climate crises. On October 2, 2025, Council adopted the new OCP: Victoria 2050 after a two-year planning process.

The OCP sets the vision and framework to balance growth with preservation and guide the City's work, decisions and actions over the next three decades. The citywide changes support housing solutions, climate action and complete communities that will shape Victoria through to 2050.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the engagement process. Your feedback shaped how Victoria will grow and change into the future.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Feedback Shaping the Future of the Gorge

Thank you to everyone who shared input on planning for sea level rise and coastal flooding in the Gorge and Portage Inlet. Engagement wrapped up on September 30, 2025.

Next, we're reviewing the feedback with our partner municipalities — Saanich, View Royal and Esquimalt — to help guide the development of the Gorge Coastal Flood Adaptation Strategy. Your feedback will help shape adaptation options to protect homes, businesses, infrastructure and natural areas from flooding and rising sea levels.

We'll be back in the spring for a community workshop to continue the conversation.

The final strategy is expected in late 2026.

[LEARN MORE](#)



E-Bike Share Coming This Summer

Thank you for your suggestions for potential e-bike share parking zone locations. Engagement closed in late September and we're now using your feedback to plan and prioritize locations.

This summer, you'll be able to grab an e-bike, cruise to your destination and drop off your ride in the nearest bike share parking zone. Stay tuned for updates!

[LEARN MORE](#)



Major Street Upgrades coming to Cook, North Blanshard Street

Thank you to those who shared feedback and ideas during earlier engagement on transportation improvements across the city. Your input helped shape the designs now moving into construction on Cook St. (from Bay St. to Maplewood Rd.) and Blanshard St. (from Caledonia Ave. to Kings Rd.).

Updates include road paving, maintenance, protected bike lanes, new crosswalks, accessibility improvements and traffic signal and intersection safety upgrades.

Get updates by signing up for project newsletters at victoria.ca/signup.



Did you know the City of Victoria offers several newsletters?
[Click here to learn more.](#)

Follow us for news about future events



Questions? Contact us today: engage@victoria.ca
victoria.ca

Email sent to



City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square I
Victoria, British Columbia I V8W 1P6 I Canada I
engage@victoria.ca

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From:
Subject: Feedback on the 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 15, 2026 at 8:49 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

I submitted feedback regarding the 2026 Draft Budget to council members and the mayor on October 23rd.

I'm disappointed to see that the updated 2026 Draft Budget does not seem to incorporate feedback submitted by me or others during the first round. I am even more disappointed to hear direct from Councillor Stephen Hammond at a North Park Community Association meeting that this version of the drafted budget **did not** incorporate any significant feedback from the community.

I urge the council to *listen* to the community. **We do not wish to see a disproportionate amount of city funding allocated to fund VicPD.** This funding comes at the direct expense of community and social programs that *actually* keep the community safe.

The previous draft and the current version both do not adequately demonstrate how providing additional budget to VicPD will solve the ongoing issues within our community. In fact, allocating this amount of funding to VicPD will negatively impact key community-building spaces—such as our libraries and social services. For example, our libraries are not open on Sundays—a direct result of a lack of funding from the city. The draft VicPD budget also proposes to support the School Police Liaison Officers, a program that has had significant negative feedback from the community.

Increasing a police presence in our city has not been proven to improve our community safety and wellbeing. I'm disheartened to see that even after misallocation of funds by VicPD (ex: parties) has had no significant impact on the council's consideration for providing even more funds to the VicPD.

Please take this feedback into consideration **this time**. The feedback process does not work if council completely disregards the community's voice in the process.

Best,

From:
Subject: police budget
Date: January 15, 2026 at 10:54 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a resident of victoria to express my opposition to the proposed 2026 police budget. The Victoria police are already the most expensive force per capita in the province and they regularly fail to uphold basic tenants of care, harm reduction, de-escalation, and community engagement. I do not believe that additional personnel will improve the service they provide.

Please consider allocating funds to social services that prioritize well being and have a legacy of good relationships with the public. Street nurses, peer support, harm reduction, crisis intervention, etc are much more effective resources for addressing the desperate situations caused by the opioid and housing crises.

thank you for your consideration,

From

Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Input

Date: January 16, 2026 at 12:02 PM

To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Greetings!

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Denman Street in our lovely neighbourhood of Fernwood.

I am writing to inform you that I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge our Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time,

Resident of Victoria, BC.

From
Subject: 2026 budget
Date: January 12, 2026 at 4:23 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good evening,

I would like to see more investment in VicPD to deal with all the issues downtown especially in the 800 block of Johnson street. An extra funds for more firefighters, garbage collection and street cleaning/sidewalk washing so much feces in the area

Thanks
Sent from my iPhone

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 12, 2026 at 3:20 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am again emailing to express my opposition to the proposed police budget. I have been unable to find any reasonable argument for the increased budget.

Looking at the "Special Committee of the Whole Meeting Report" for November 3, 2025, one component jumped out at me: "...there is clear support for Council's priorities in their Strategic Plan, with the top two priorities for attention and investment next year being Housing and Community Wellbeing and Safety." Now I understand that there is a belief that community wellbeing and safety have a causal relationship with police presence, but this is not accurate.

If the council is serious about these priorities, they will not spend more money on policing and instead will redirect the money towards direct solutions. The \$9,786,637—to be paid from the city budget for the proposed police budget increase—can do a lot if directed appropriately. Just look at the results from the Toronto Community Crisis Service pilot program: <https://www.toronto.ca/news/toronto-city-council-receives-toronto-community-crisis-service-mid-year-progress-report-confirming-positive-outcomes-community-impact/>

I call upon the council members to be leaders—to show that we can solve problems by thinking about and implementing solutions based on evidence rather than essentially buying a very expensive rug to try to cover the issues up.

Cheers,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Budget feedback
Date: January 13, 2026 at 11:38 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I have a great issue with an increase in the police budget by over 5%. All the indicators that I have looked at point to a decrease in the overall crime rate in Victoria. So why an increase? Of course the answer is the perceived danger caused by homeless and street folk. This also allows for the biggest By-Law enforcement budget line in BC! If even a small portion of this budget was spent on support services we may just be able to help our homeless neighbours. I realize the issues are complex, drug users, mental health, high rents, lack of provincial support for mental health, addiction and housing. But is policing your answer? Policing ourselves out of this situation has never and will never work.

Your lack of vision and your hardnosed approach to our homeless neighbours is an abomination. Taking all they own, constantly harassing and moving them along to where??? There is no place for them and yet you keep disrupting and stealing their belongings on a daily basis.

There are examples of programs and services that do work. Look to these and stop thinking a police officer and a By-Law officer are going to solve this situation.

I am appalled that our city council is wasting more money in this way. And still doing nothing to help. Your combined budget line for Police and By-Law is over \$80M. Shake your heads, grow some ovaries and spend some of that money to make some real changes and partnerships to support our most vulnerable residents.

Respectfully,

James Bay, Victoria.

From:
Subject: Budget
Date: January 11, 2026 at 10:43 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello.

I'd like to let you know I absolutely do not think the Victoria Police department should be getting a budget increase of what they are requesting. Residents of Victoria are already stretched financially and adding this amount to their taxes for policing that in my opinion does not serve them well is terrible. If the police department would cut back on their egregious overtime use and buying expensive vehicles they wouldn't need this much money to function. Also a survey of residents would be an accessible way to get feedback on budget questions in the future.

Thanks,

From: Ty.Whittaker@colliers.com
Subject: City Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 7:08 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

DVBA has forwarded information on the upcoming budget proposal. Cost of living is not increasing as rapidly as this year over year appreciation in taxes. The City's goal should be to match CPI at most. Small business is paying for your big fat government salaries and taxes have almost tripled in the last 10 years.....The system is broken. Focus on cutting costs and running the City as a business which you provide services. Run your city as a business and insist your employees work 5 days a week in the office and support local business. Yr over yr increases is not sustainable and will not be supported.

From:
Subject: Mail Attachment
Date: January 16, 2026 at 8:32 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Taxes on homes is way too high. Stop all unnecessary stuff. Police budget is way out of control. Giving developers property taxes holidays is seditious to home owners. I'll actively try to get all you radicals out. The referendum on the pool was bullshit. There was nothing to give a no option. More bullshit. Taking a raise is another kick in the face.

From:
Subject: Feedback on 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 12, 2026 at 2:47 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good afternoon,

Below is my feedback to 2026 Draft Budget.

1. 5.02% tax increase just for police operations is outrageous and extremely high. Police is not underfunded in our city and spending so much money on police services means enforcing and serving power rather than citizens and is more fashionable for authoritarian regimes, not community focused small city like Victoria. Use this money to create programs helping people in need, not harassing and policing them. Invest in mental health programs and staff instead of investing in police. They already have the highest budget, and what improvements do we see in the city? Homelessness crisis only deepens and it won't change if you shower the police with more of my money. Stop doing same things and expecting different results, cause it won't take you anywhere and only shows incompetency and lack of understanding of how to govern a city.
2. "\$209.2 million invested in the ongoing design and construction of the Crystal Pool and Wellness Centre." - expenses like this must stop. Crystal Pool is a quite new facility and why do we need to tear it down not even a few decades after it was built? Buildings like this one should last at least 50 years if not more. You rebuild it now for over 200 million and then do it again in 15 years? What's your plan on this and other recreation facilities, really? Moving the entire pool instead of renovating the existing one is reckless and extremely dumb expense.
3. Only 2.7 million for community planning is a joke. How do you plan to fight housing crisis with that little money? Sure, better give it to the police instead of building houses for people in need working full time and yet not being able to afford their rent. "Housing remains the top priority for investment overall" there you have it in the survey, but no, why listen to people's needs, better to keep doing what your corporate masters and lobbyists tell you to do, right?
4. City council gave themselves ridiculous and extremely high salary increases while front line and public workers are forced to strike to fight for a fraction of wage increase comparing to what they gave to themselves. They already earn quite a lot and don't need more. Some employees haven't seen any wage increases and they earn way less than you for doing more important and demanding jobs. Show some respect and dignity, this money grab is insolent and disrespectful.
5. Would be nice to see some money going toward fixing noise pollution and fumes pollution in the city. People drive cars that shouldn't be on the road due to being too loud or extremely polluting. No filters, tuned engines and exhausts are damaging Victoria's citizen's hearing and lungs. I demand a clear strategy on holding drivers who harm our community members and wildlife accountable. Implement noise radars as well as mandatory technical inspections of cars. Execution of fines for vehicles not compliant will bring money to the city and allow to cover costs of this initiative (and probably way more).
6. We need massive investments in public transportation. Relying only on buses is inefficient and discourages people from using public transportation. Restore the railway! We need train to Langford, Sooke, Colwood, and preferably all the way to Tofino, plus the other way to Nanaimo, int. airport and ferry terminal. Buses get to ferry in 70 minutes which is ridiculous and discouraging. Getting to Colwood takes over 1h and requires 40 minutes walk. Getting to Sooke is 2h trip by bus. Any road accident is also affecting buses making these 1 or 2 h trips extended to 3 or more hours, while train goes uninterrupted regardless situation on the highway.

That would be it from me. Thank you for your consideration.

Cheers

From:
Subject: 10 per cent tax increase
Date: December 15, 2025 at 10:07 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I am writing to express my opposition to a 10 per cent tax increase for Victorians. I will be starting on a fixed income in 2026 and this is a horrible start. Why do the police need the same amount of increase as all the other services? It's not ok.

Tax increases should not rise above inflation. I have just moved to Victoria and I won't be able to stay if there are increases in everything - food, insurance, etc and the highest being taxes.

Please go back to the drawing board.

Please.

Jane's Bay resident

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 20, 2026 at 12:02 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

[REDACTED] appears similar to someone who previously sent you email, but may not be that person. [Learn why this could be a risk](#)

To the City,

Over

the last decade, the City of Victoria Council has caused lasting and, in many cases, irreversible damage to our city. But let us focus on just the last four years. With only about one-third of Victoria's eligible population turning out to vote in the last election, it is clear that residents have been left without answers by the outcome: a council that has demonstrated a lack of common sense, fiscal responsibility, creativity, and practical solutions.

Council

has shown little ability to generate new revenue, while appearing hellbent on undermining downtown businesses through unchecked street disorder, excessive and poorly designed bike lanes, the removal of income-generating parking spaces, and now the proposed removal of the Broughton Street parkade. And on top of this, you are preparing to spend over \$200 million on a swimming pool. What a joke.

The

result is a downtown that feels dull, sluggish, and increasingly unpleasant — a space that is supposed to be enjoyed by everyone. The level of arrogance coming from the mayor and senior city staff is unsettling. With a gobbledegook Community Safety and Well-Being program, downtown now seems destined to be overseen by luxury beliefs and utopian visions rather than by practical, results-based governance.

I

know this firsthand, having lived and worked downtown for over 20 years. At times, the City's apparent motto seems to be, "Build it, and no one shall come." Aside from the bike lane connecting the Galloping Goose to downtown, most other bike lanes are simply not used enough to justify their cost or their impact. Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on NIMBY-driven "traffic calming" measures and poorly planned bike lanes that divert traffic onto actual residential streets, creating a more dangerous environment for drivers, residents, children, and cyclists alike.

These

decisions have driven people away. Residents who once shopped, dined, and spent time downtown now come in only for very specific reasons, if at all. Once people change their

habits, they do not simply return. For this reason, all new bike lane and traffic-calming projects should be paused until a more competent mayor and council are in place. Victoria is not Amsterdam; we lack both the transit infrastructure and the population density to make this model work.

Another

issue that is rarely acknowledged when discussing the ballooning police budget is the strain caused by constant weekly protests, which divert police resources away from addressing local public safety concerns. In addition, the failures of the federal, provincial, and municipal governments to address street disorder have led to increased policing and cleaning costs. Police are doing their jobs, only to repeatedly re-arrest the same individuals who are released shortly afterward. Ignoring these realities when explaining rising police costs is misleading and actively deceptive.

At

a minimum, we need the basics to function better. The City must become far more fiscally responsible and begin restoring what has effectively been taken from downtown property owners and businesses. Continued property tax increases will inevitably be passed

on to renters and consumers at all levels, making downtown even less affordable and accelerating its decline.

I

am not in favour of your proposed 10.44% property tax increase. Trim the fat. Do only what is necessary. Bring in real economists and competent city planners, and put them back in charge of the wheel.

Regards,

From: y
Subject: Budget 2026
Date: January 19, 2026 at 9:05 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To the Mayor and Council,

After reviewing documents pertaining to the proposed City Budget 2026, I feel compelled to send this letter. The following facts are greatly concerning and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed increased funding for VicPD.

- The City is proposing a 14% increase in operating spending for VicPD, up from \$68.2 million to \$78 million.
- VicPD's total budget is set to rise to \$90 million, and Victoria's share (\$78 million) constitutes almost a quarter of the city's total budget for 2026.
- VicPD costs more per capita than any of B.C.'s other 11 municipal police departments or 67 RCMP municipal units. VicPD wants to push that cost even higher in 2026, to \$750 per person.

As a renter in the city, I strongly urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposing decreased funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance is a huge step backward. We are at a crisis point in cost of living, and City Council should be doing everything in its power to make housing more affordable.

As a relative newcomer to Victoria, I have been heartbroken and shocked by the level of housing insecurity here, and especially, by the brutal treatment of the houseless in policy and on the ground by VicPD. I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on Policing as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I am concerned that the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students and are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

Building safe and vibrant communities starts from the ground up, not from a top-down repressive approach. More policing is not the answer!

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

TALKING POINTS

- The City is proposing a 14% increase in operating spending for VicPD, up from \$68.2 million to \$78 million.
- VicPD's total budget is set to rise to \$90 million, and Victoria's share (\$78 million) constitutes almost a quarter of the city's total budget for 2026.
- VicPD costs more per capita than any of B.C.'s other 11 municipal police departments or 67 RCMP municipal units. VicPD wants to push that cost even higher in 2026, to \$750 per person.
- In comparison, the total proposed budget for the Greater Victoria Public Library is \$6.9 million and the budget for all of Parks & Recreation is only \$22.7 million.
- Thanks to advocacy from Victoria Transit Riders Union, the Youth Bus Pass program was saved from the chopping block. However, in order to afford the massive increase to VicPD's budget, the City is proposing **cutting funding** to:
 - Arts, Culture, and Events: **down 18%**
 - Neighbourhoods (which includes supports for neighbourhood associations and community building): **down 4.3%**
 - Climate Action: **down 10%**
 - Citywide Planning (which includes developing and implementing policies for affordable housing, tenant assistance, and equity initiatives): **down 8.4%**
 - The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: **down 3.1%**

- Community Grants: **down 8.3%**
- Meanwhile, the proposed budget for bylaw services has gone up from \$5.4 million to \$9.7 million, an 80% increase!
- Furthermore, in order to meet VicPD's demands, the city is proposing a property tax increase of 10.44%, *half* of which is just for the police.

From:
Subject: Budget Input
Date: January 20, 2026 at 6:46 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

VicPD's budget is astronomical. As a nurse struggling with what little resources we have to work with it feels almost disrespectful that VicPD are getting so much funding. I'm not sure whose priorities see VicPD continuing to receive so so much money, but certainly not mine. I'm a 32 year old single mum struggling to keep up with the cost of living in this city where I was born. What kind of old boys club are we running here? I'm sure VicPD will do just fine with their already massive budget without further increase!

Thank you for your consideration,

From:
Subject: Budget
Date: January 18, 2026 at 4:04 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Yet another double-digit increase...it's not sustainable year after year.
Where the heck do you think retired people are going to find this Monday. Inflation is only 2%. And, then there are school taxes on top of this...it's all taxes.
Stop it!

Victoria BC

The older I get, the more I have learned...
Which bridges to cross, and which bridges to burn.
...author unknown

From:
Subject: city budget
Date: January 18, 2026 at 9:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

So tax increase will be 5.42% and 5.02% for police for total increase of 10.44%. Not good enough, this way exceeds the rate of inflation. If Vancouver can hold to 0% increase and West Vancouver to 2% increase Victoria needs to follow their lead. The city of Victoria needs to get back to funding basic core services municipally. 5.5 million in community driven initiatives and economic activity within the city suite of grants can be eliminated or drastically reduced. \$450,000 for traffic calming? There seems to be quite a few cars with side panel damage lately, probably from all the unnecessary cement islands in the middle of the roads. These double digit tax increases can simply not keep continuing!

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 16, 2026 at 7:29 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

We are property owners in Rockland. I am writing to provide our feedback on the proposed 2026 budget.

As a homeowner, I am finding municipal costs are increasing at an alarming rate, far beyond CPI levels year over year. One has to wonder at what point we start pricing ourselves out of the ability to own or rent housing. I think we have reached that tipping point as we see younger people exiting the city in search of more affordable housing options, and more businesses are shuttering because they cannot afford to operate in Victoria. Storm water collection is a good example of this. It was once included as part of the water bill, then was split out for 'transparency'. About 4 years ago, our stormwater charge doubled as the city decided to include all hard surfaces in a property instead of just the roofline. This was communicated as an 'oversight' but broadly affected all homeowners providing significant revenue generation for the City. Stormwater fees now exceed our water fees. Then we hear about the Centennial Square reno project that provides really no meaningful improvement to the space as it is currently used. There is the constant addition to the bikelane network which practically I find is grossly underutilized and does not justify the cost. Finally I am reading in the news about a new issue to support people in subsidized housing so they can move into market housing. This social support will be expensive and is NOT in the scope of what municipal governments should be doing.

Many of these specific items are not covered in the budget but Community Safety and Wellbeing costs are escalating by an eye watering 79%. How is this a reasonable increase???

In summary, I feel the City has overstretched their mandate and are escalating costs beyond what is affordable for most homeowners. Nice to have facilities and services are seen as must haves by City planners. The power of compound interest is at play here also when year over year above average tax increases are putting excessive pressure on homeowners and businesses. I vote for paring back capital projects to what is absolutely necessary to maintain City services; halt bikelane projects and retain the parking spaces; reduce funding to social benefit programs that are not within the purview of the City's mandate.

Further rework is required on the budget.

Thankyou

From: VE
Subject: Mail Attachment
Date: January 18, 2026 at 9:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I declare and comment that the Vicpd and its founders and supporters are committing Human Rights Violations and Misconduct with the budgets since time immemorial and they are funded to comitt genocide towards the First Nations and vulnerable communities by falsifying evidence and breaching people's privacy with military and psychological war tactics and the social workers that work under them do the same.

The budget is a horrible response to the reality of the people. Settlers for Huey for Life.

Kindly,

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget
Date: January 22, 2026 at 3:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Enough is enough! This city has been living beyond its means for too long. It is time to make some tough decisions and pair this proposed budget. If that means cutting staff and programs, so be it. The increase for each citizen should be close to the annual inflation rate. Currently that is around 2%. The citizens of Victoria cannot keep paying annual increases of 10%. I think there are very few citizens that see increases in their annual income that come close to the increases in taxes that this City Council keeps approving every year.

Regards.

Victoria

From:
Subject: 2026 draft budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 9:05 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there

My name is _____, I'm a Victoria resident living in North Park. I'm writing to express my concern about the proposed new budget, specifically regarding police funding. As a North Park resident and youth outreach worker working in the city core I have been a first hand witness to the issues that an increasing police and bylaw budget purports to address. I understand that many people downtown feel uncomfortable witnessing the abject poverty and struggle many other downtown residents and citizens -and they certainly are residents and citizens, homeless or not- face day to day.

I am also scholar in the field of sociology and social work, and I know that the evidence does not tell us that police and enforcement make communities safer. These measures alienate people and make it exponentially more difficult for them to access services due the need to constantly move locations as they are being displaced by COV bylaw officers and VicPD, whether or not they are drug users.

I know that this increase in enforcement budgets comes alongside a decrease in several community initiatives such as grants and citywide planning. Police budgets have increased across the country nearly unabated for decades, and this has done nothing to increase the socioeconomic roots of poverty, mental illness, ill health and substance use in our communities: We know that accessible housing and shelter, and readily available, easy to access, and culturally appropriate supports for mental health and substance use are what alleviate these problems.

Rather than providing safety and security, police and bylaw enforcement are a constant stressor in the lives of the unhoused youth that I work with, who have lost all their belongings many times over in the "sweeps". Since last summer it has becoming exponentially harder even to find them so that I can help them connect with health care, housing, treatment, and other services. They have been forced into dangerous situations such as isolated substance use and bunking with abusive family members and others who exploit them.

Of course this is only one perspective. An increase to enforcement budgets through increased property taxes is money that could have gone to more accessible transit, or arts. I will likely feel this increase through higher rents in a city that already has some of the highest rental rates in the county. It will likely result in more police in schools, something that is not wanted by many parents and students.

I appreciate council hearing what I have to say here, and please know it is rooted in what i have heard working in this community for many years, at the frontlines of the multiple crises. I know that there needs also to be more funding and accountability at the provincial and federal levels. But I hope that the city recognizes this opportunity to innovate and listen.

Best,

From:
Subject: Budget feedback
Date: January 21, 2026 at 9:35 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Please refuse the proposed budget increase for VicPD. It is unsustainable to increase the police budget every year. There is no evidence that increasing police budgets reduce crime rates, based on research across 20 large Canadian municipalities. Policing does not deal with the root causes of crime, and that's where we need to focus instead.

<https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cbc.ca%2Fnews%2Fcanada%2Fhamilton%2Fpolice-budget-crime-rates-canada-1.7086532&data=05%7C02%7Clegislativeservices%40victoria.ca%7C2b9c23452d7d449e3def08de5978151b%7Cd7098116c6e84d2a89eedb15b6c23375%7C0%7C0%7C639046569462806796%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMmIsIkFOIjoiTWVpbiIsIldUIjoifQ%3D%3D%7C80000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=84iVYID88Ut6%2B5fMZP2BJA3zSh8jHOEplSirjsFACI%3D&reserved=0>

North Park, Victoria

From:
Subject: budget input
Date: January 22, 2026 at 7:40 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello.

My name is [redacted] and I live at [redacted] Pembroke St in Victoria, and have been a resident of Victoria for 9.5 years.

I am vehemently opposed to the 14% Vic PD budget increase proposal, and dismayed as a renter and artist at the idea of the arts being cut and a decrease in funding for community grants, neighbourhood housing, and tenant assistance.

This is an expensive place to call home, but I love it here. While there are issues in the city, I do not believe the police department to be the solution to any of them, and I beg of you to vote against this.

I vote in all elections including municipal, and I and my friends will be closely watching your actions. Choose the people.

Sincerely

From:
Subject: City Budget
Date: January 22, 2026 at 9:05 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident and renter, residing in an apartment building Johnson/Douglas. I have lived in Victoria for the last 6 years, and am a University grad student at UVic and part-time support worker.

Victoria is my home, and I have lived on Johnson Street (Johnson/Douglas) for almost 2 years.

I am writing to let you know that I am vehemently opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers, and the introduction of new beat cops.

I am shocked and appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD.

I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

Living at Johnson/Douglas, I regularly see people who are unhoused or are in active drug-use, and while I am unhappy to see people who are struggling, I have never been made to feel unsafe by these people. The danger that people who are unhoused and in active drug-use pose, is to themselves, they are overlooked by

I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs, mental health programs, and community doctors.

The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighborhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance.

As someone who will vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time. and I hope to see better decisions made in the future.

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Input
Date: January 21, 2026 at 12:20 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To Mayor and Council,

My name is _____, I am a Victoria resident residing on Shakespeare St. I am writing to urge City Council to **not approve** the proposed 14% increase to the VicPD budget.

I have written to you before on this issue, and am writing again so that my opposition to this increase may be noted in your deliberations on the proposed budget this coming week.

As a homeowner, I am aghast that City Council would consider increasing property taxes to meet the perpetually increasing VicPD budget while simultaneously considering cuts to housing, social programs, food security, and arts and culture. These are economically challenging times, and it is already a challenge for my family to meet rising costs of living.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. It is for this reason that I am vehemently opposed to seeing nearly 25% of my property taxes going towards policing services to meet community safety needs. This is not an evidence-based approach - trauma-informed social service programs and housing initiatives are both more cost effective and efficient at addressing community safety.

While I imagine that I do not align politically with all City Council members on the issue of policing, I will be looking closely at how you address the fiscal question in front of you: does VicPD deserve an unprecedented 14% increase where other services are being cut?

Will I support City Councillors seeking re-election in 2026 who vote to cut programs and services to minimize impact of the 2026 budget on tax payers, yet cannot apply the same fiscal conservatism to VicPD's requested budget increases? I think not.

From:
Subject: Feedback on draft budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 9:12 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a Fernwood resident. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers, while other essential funding is cut or kept the same.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go toward social or arts programming, not hiring more police officers, because I know that community is what keeps us safe,

I am also appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Police Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 9:20 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Fort Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Mail Attachment
Date: January 23, 2026 at 7:43 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I have lived in Victoria or Saanich for more than 25 years. I work here, my kids go to school here, and I visit the downtown core 2-3x a week. I see the problems our city faces in terms of homelessness and addiction. I am also strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go toward affordable housing, food security, healthcare and education for all, not hiring more police officers. True crime prevention means making sure everyone has their basic needs met, because community is what keeps us safe, not cops.

As a parent of two young children, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

long time City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:10 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I do not support giving more money to politicians and police officers. Their salaries are adequate. What's not adequate is support for those who are actually struggling. We need more low income housing, more support for poor families, and better mental health care for those in need...etc... I want my taxes to help the many desperate people who live in Victoria, not pay for new cars for people who already live comfortably.

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:30 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear City Councillors,

My name is _____, I am a Victoria resident residing on Ross Street in Fairfield. I am writing to voice my opposition to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a resident who was raised in Victoria and who has lived experience with a family member who is part of the unhoused population on Pandora street, I urge Mayor and Council to redirect these funds toward community programs that actually make our streets safer. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, and invest in mental health supports.

I urge Mayor and Council to invest in sustainable solutions and community programs, not band-aid solutions that provide the illusion of action and safety. Police officers do not have the skill sets to effectively manage addiction and mental illness, and do not increase community safety for everyone.

As an alumni of Oak Bay High School in SD61, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming. **Supporting this kind of programming is what increases social supports for at-risk youth, a crucial part of preventing future addiction and crime.**

Lastly, as an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, in favour of providing an increase to the police department. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live. For myself, if my aging parents were not still living here I would not choose to continue to live in Victoria. In addition to the lack of affordability and support for artists, all of the vibrant community arts spaces, as well as small businesses that bring heart and spirit to our city, have been slowly dying. It has been extremely disheartening to witness.

I know that many folks are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. **Instead, reduce the existing police budget to further invest these funds in community supports and services.**

Thank you,

Ross Street, Victoria BC

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:21 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

City of Victoria,

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Hillside Ave. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist and a renter, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Hillside ave

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:16 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Cortez Place.

The City is proposing a 14% increase in operating spending for VicPD, up from \$68.2 million to \$78 million and that VicPD's total budget is set to rise to \$90 million, and Victoria's share (\$78 million) constitutes almost a quarter of the city's total budget for 2026. VicPD costs more per capita than any of B.C.'s other 11 municipal police departments or 67 RCMP municipal units.

To accommodate the increase in VicPD's budget, the City is proposing **cutting funding** to:

- Arts, Culture, and Events: **down 18%**
- Neighbourhoods (which includes supports for neighbourhood associations and community building): **down 4.3%**
- Climate Action: **down 10%**
- Citywide Planning (which includes developing and implementing policies for affordable housing, tenant assistance, and equity initiatives): **down 8.4%**
- The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: **down 3.1%**
- Community Grants: **down 8.3%**

I know the facts; I am informed and frustrated.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As someone who works with unsheltered people, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep, treatment and recovery options, or a safe place to use drugs.

I have seen first hand the harm that is caused, and am personal witness to the real change that can happen when community supports and funding is increased. Police may move people around, but they do not address the problems at the core of the cause for unsheltered people. Community agencies do that.

If you want to actually increase public safety and have less homeless people and drugs on the streets, the answer is community services. Police officers will not make the change you wish to see.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: police budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:59 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

hello, my name is . I am a resident of victoria (croft street) and i'd like to voice my concerns regarding the VicPD budget. the innumerable academic articles show the increase police budgets do not improve crime rates and lead to community break down by cutting community services (<https://utppublishing.com/doi/full/10.3138/cpp.2022-050>).

Open fear and hostility towards under-supported and vulnerable populations, such as the unhoused community, will not solve our problems. Increasing the Police budget will only worsen our conditions. I shame all who proposed to cut the Youth Bus Pass program, and I shame all who propose to cut funding to Art, Culture, and Events (-18%), Neighbourhoods programs (-4.3%), Climate Action (-10%; shouldnt we be investing in our future?? wtf?), Citywide Planning (-8.4%; again, wtf??), EDI Office (-3.1%), and Community Grants (-8.3%) in favour of a higher police budget.

Which will go towards what, harassing unhoused people? Doing crappy "wellness checks"? Harassing people who care about our city and want to change things for the better? Protect Private property, aka some rich guy's stuff? Not a worthy use of property taxes. We don't need more cops or more specialized equipment to hurt people with, we need funding that invests in the people of our city. An increased police budget will not do that. Open your eyes and read the evidence that's out there. The best cities in the world do not surveil, punish, or disempower their citizens, they fund community. If you care about fostering safety you'll invest in housing, neighbourhoods, arts, culture, and libraries instead.

Regards,

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:53 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident since 2015, residing in Fairfield. I am vehemently opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived/living experience of mental health struggles, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Financial Plan Feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:38 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there,

I'm a Victoria resident living in Oaklands.

I am writing to share my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to Vic PD's budget and the resultant cuts to arts and culture, climate action, community grants, and DEI, amongst others.

I urge mayor and council to redirect some of the proposed funds for Vic PD to areas like affordable housing, washroom facilities, arts and culture, and recreation.

Funds invested in these community programs will disproportionately contribute to community safety when compared to policing.

Thanks for considering my input.

From:
Subject: Budget teedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:20 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts about the 2026 City of Victoria budget.

As a homeowner I understand that a growing population requires greater funding for services and infrastructure.

I have listened to the VicPD's reasons for the increase. On the surface it sounded great. The plan being that gaps will be filled and projects that started and stopped would be more consistent. I did feel that not enough of a critical lens was applied for an agency that holds a lot of power in our city. I recently was able to take part in the Spark event that the city hosted and heard Fiona Wilson speak more casually. My sense from the engagement with the discussion groups is that she seems willing to do better. Other community members spoke of how her leadership is a sharp contrast to how Victoria policing was approached previously. This is encouraging, but I am still hesitant to fully support the enormity of their ask.

Fiona shared the volume and complexities of the calls that the VicPD receive on a regular basis. I feel that the VicPD are not just dealing with real emergencies, but are being relied upon too heavily by the citizens of our city. I fear we are in a self-perpetuating loop and rather than spend more money on policing services, can the city and the VicPD not take on an awareness campaign to educate the public on other ways to address complex situations?

Safety and mental health/addiction is top of mind for many residents. I can imagine that those individuals whom the general public is afraid of, also live in fear for the same reasons. As a whole society I believe we need to take on a greater shared responsibility of our current economic situation.

If the police budget does pass, can the idea of education also accompany it to bring awareness to the general public to understand how not to use the service as a catch all and babysitting service? Can the awareness of the wasted time that is involved by members of the police when they are responding to calls or responsibilities that are not necessary be shared to increase a higher level of understanding? Fiona Wilson spoke of two officers who sat with an accosted individual in the emergency room for 15 hours as they were unable to release the individual, only to learn that the individual was then released by the hospital staff.

The general public does not know or see the complex network of support that the teams of health, housing and policing are currently engaged in. Can we as citizens of Victoria know more to then pressure the provincial government to live up to their level of responsibility? There is so much misinformation that exists around mental health & addiction, safe supply and what roles each level of government is responsible for.


I support a community that offers services that enable all members of our community to participate. I support funding for seniors, youth and young families. I support culture to allow us all to celebrate together. I support funding for infrastructure such as the bike lanes and improved amenities as it creates safer and more accessible opportunities for everyone. I understand that I am responsible, as a member of this community, to pay taxes for these services and improvements. I want my taxes to support all members of this community, not further marginalize those already on the edges. I ask that you use those funds to operate a safe and equitable city. I ask that you not accept the budget based on fear but on a sustainable future. If greater policing services are needed, for example, I implore those in leadership to create more opportunities for transparency and education around how the greater public can also work towards making things better.

We are incredibly privileged to live in what feels like a bubble sometimes, in our little island city. We can't ignore that many also face challenges when it comes to equity for all residents. We cannot shy away from being inconvenienced so that others who do not experience a level of comfort and stability. are taken care of.

I support a budget that unites rather than divides. I think my feedback is more philosophical than practical, but these are the considerations that I have in mind when I engage with decisions that will affect my community.

Thank you,

Victoria resident

From: 
Subject: Police budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 12:47 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is [redacted]. I am a Victoria resident living on Vancouver Street, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities especially towards vulnerable populations of people.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being - housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Vancouver st, City of Victoria Resident

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From:
Subject: budget feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:34 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] and I am a Victoria resident, residing in North Park. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge the Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a nurse I see the impact the housing crisis has on our most vulnerable populations and the negative impacts of over policing. Vic PD already takes enough of our resources. We need community supports funded now not police that have already shown themselves to be ineffective in dealing with the crisis we face.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

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From:
Subject: Budget Input
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:15 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ I am a Victoria resident, residing on Washington Ave. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go towards equitable housing opportunities and support for arts and culture, not hiring more police officers, because I know that community is what keeps us safe, not cops.

As a parent of young children, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As a regular voter in municipal elections I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time,

_____, Victoria

From:
Subject: Draft budget feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:03 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Grant st. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person who cares about my unhoused neighbors, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Grant st, City of Victoria Resident

Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Input
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:50 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am writing as a citizen of the City of Victoria to share my input on the proposed budget increase of 14% for VicPD. I am incredibly disappointed with the projected total VicPD budget increase on track to constitute almost a quarter of the City of Victoria's budget for 2026, when there are several other areas of the public sector that desperately need these funds. This unreasonable increase in the VicPD's budget will only be made possible by cutting funding to several integral sectors and programs in our city, including: Arts, Culture and Events, Climate Action, Community Grants, and Citywide Planning. These sectors and programs are what keep the City of Victoria healthy, vibrant, and connected.

It is time to become more imaginative and resourceful. It is time to end the belief that more police services will make our city safer. It is time to acknowledge that the issues, such as homelessness, that VicPD is being funded to "control" are systemic issues requiring time, care, and money to address. Clearly, this money is available and could be allocated to these issues within our city. The money that is proposed for an increased VicPD budget could instead be used for: frontline workers providing care on the streets, housing projects for low-income and unhoused people, free food programs, safe injection sites, counselling and rehabilitation services, and more.

Let me end this email by stating clearly that I CONDEMN the proposed budget increases for the VicPD in the City of Victoria.

Sincerely,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject:
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:34 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Carberry Gardens. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I am urging Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Carberry Gardens, Victoria BC resident.

From

Subject: Budget comments

Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:01 PM

To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is . I am a lifelong resident of Victoria. I am staunchly opposed to the proposed VicPD budget increase.

As you know, there is already a rising affordability crisis in Victoria. I am doing okay financially and yet nowhere close to being able to own a house in Victoria. I stay here because I love this town, but decisions to increase the police budget hurt our city and residents like me. I urge Mayor and Council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

To decrease climate action, arts and culture, city planning, DEI, and community grants while increasing the already looming police budget is frankly disgraceful. There is no metric by which increased police have been shown to improve communities. You are hurting Victorians. VicPD already costs more per capita than other BC police and RCMP, how can you justify yet more increases? How can you only propose to give the GVPL 6.9 million while giving VicPD 90?! It is absurd.

The way that you have handled the unhoused crisis is inexcusable. Increasing police while cutting citywide planning will not solve this. This is a sincere plea to Mayor and Council: please do not make this mistake - we need to fund social programs and affordable housing.

We cannot afford to have our property taxes increased by over 10% for half of that to go to the police!!! Those taxes need to go into programs that serve the community.

Every shred of credible research agrees that police DO NOT keep us safe. They cause more harm. Strong communities with services and amenities are the only viable option. If Mayor and Council will not be swayed due to lack of empathy then I urge the use of sound logic on this issue. There is ZERO justification for a 14% increase. 68.2 million is already TOO MUCH.

I implore Mayor and Council to envision a city that uses THAT many millions on social programs and I beseech them to tell me that it is not a safer, more vibrant, healthier, and more sustainable place than the one they are currently crafting with a glut of police.

From:
Subject: Draft Financial Plan Feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:12 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc: mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am writing to ask that the city and council not include a 14% budget increase for the Victoria Police Department in the 2026-2030 draft financial plan. I am specifically suggesting that the city not include in the budget the funds to hire 25 new police officers.

Thank you,

, Victoria

From:
Subject:
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:52 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Pendergast Street. I am strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a resident who relies exclusively on walking and public transportation to get around our city, I see firsthand the results of a failing system every day. I see my unhoused neighbours having their possessions taken away or destroyed by police, I see people shivering in the cold and rain, and dying from toxic drugs. The police do not make me feel safer in my city. Seeing strong community and people helping one another makes me feel safe.

As a person with lived experience of mental health challenges, and as someone who has worked in the downtown Public Library, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs. We need to invest in social supports with reliable frameworks that follow a care-based approach and prioritize members of our communities.

I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Your community will hold you accountable.

Thank you for your time.

Pendergast Street, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Police budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:55 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is

I am a Victoria resident, residing on Cook st. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: vicpd budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:37 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ I live in Victoria on Terrace ave.

I am writing to say I wholeheartedly disagree with the proposed budget increase for the VicPD.

It is at or near the highest paid police force in the country per capita. The salaries for the highest paid employees, especially the chief are way too high. The majority of time I see police officers in town they are taking homeless peoples belongings and disposing of them. If the city spent the 11 million on real care for people experiencing homelessness we could even further reduce the police budget. Care such as increasing shelter beds and treatments for addiction.

Look at how much the average worker makes at a shelter, they're interacting with the same people the police are. Make the salaries the same.

Thank you very much for your time,

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in deep opposition to the increase of the Vic PD budget by 14%, including the hiring of 25 new officers.

As an academic researcher I am well aware of the ample research proving that police budget increases do not impact crime rates significantly and do not make us safer. These funds could be allocated towards housing people, which has been proven to be the most effective solution towards homelessness.

I also encourage council investing into de-tasking the police from community interventions they are not trained to handle, such as mental health crisis, and re-task folks who are much better ~~equipped~~ equipped.

The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighborhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. Without these programs I might be forced to move elsewhere. Additionally, the cut to funding for the arts by 18% is heart-breaking and lacks vision and systems-thinking. The arts are essential to building healthy and vibrant communities; they enhance cohesion and well-being.

It is fair to say that all residents suffer from this budget increase to the police, at the expense of arts, culture and affordable housing.

Sincerely,

To whom it may concern,

As a resident of Victoria I am OPPOSED to the 14.1% increase in the VICPD budget including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am OPPOSED to the city using my taxes to meet the ballooning demands of VICPD. My taxes should go towards services proven to reduce local crime and poverty including non-profit grants, libraries, arts & culture grants, and affordable housing. Cops do not keep me safe, my community does.

VICPD had 3,338 reports of overuse of force between 2018-2021, 570 of which resulted in injury. 2 assaults per day does not seem like community protection to me.

From 2020 to 2024, incidences of luring a child via computer in Victoria have increased from 4.33% to 24.67%. What are your 9 new beat cops going to do to protect our children? Where has your money been to protect my kids?

Increasing property tax causes rent increases and ultimately creates more unhoused individuals. The more our police harass and attack unhoused people, the more our hospitals feel the strain of a community lacking essential services.

I know that many Victoria residents are concerned about public safety and I am too. I am more afraid of cops than I am of the unhoused members of our community because I know that I could easily become one of them if our public services continue to get cut. FUNDS = arts & culture events, the EDI office, community grants, climate action!

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

with urgency

A concerned homeowner (Esquimalt)

To whom it may concern,

As a law student, and as a case manager at a law clinic working with people on the brink of homelessness, the idea of further policing in this city seems obtuse and outdated.

It's like slapping a band-aid on top of 100 haphazardly slapped-on band-aids. - it's not helping, and in fact it makes things work.

once again, more policing does not work!

There are already organizations up and running which have clear plans to scale to appropriately address "safety" issues in victoria,

by providing appropriate care for unhoused

folks. It's not rocket science, the solutions

are already there! Please do not let yourselves

be subject to lobbying and community pressure

rooted in naive misgivings about ~~the~~ unhoused

folks, and who gets to be treated with dignity

and who doesn't...

Please put your foot down and divert this funding elsewhere. Thank you!

Warmly,

North Park

From:
Sent: December 30, 2025 8:07 PM
To: Legislative Services email
Subject: Draft 2026 budget

A few comments:

1. Unsure where transit expansion budget fits in. There should be rail projects or at least better transit. Especially to the ferry and airport. Connecting to the outer cities would be suggested too.
2. Can property tax increase be based on value of home. Many home owners are already stretched.
3. Grant budget is very high. While it's nice to keep cities supportive perhaps an opportunity to reduce this.
4. I don't entirely know what public washroom and sidewalks need work but this seems like a large expenditure when there are other priorities.

Warm Regards,

"Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old" - Franz Kafka

From:
Subject: 2026 budget - feedback and questions
Date: December 17, 2025 at 10:36 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

In the background document, it references that the city portion of taxes is increasing 5.42% and the police portion is 5.02%, totalling a 10.44 percent increase. The overall increase would be a meld of the two percentages, not adding the two numbers together. Can you please tell me what the proposed percentage increases are for the separate two items and why this is different from the percentages on page 3 & 4 of the financial plan which indicates property tax base increase of 0.75% and increase in police budget of 13.92%. It is unclear to me what property tax increase is proposed.

The budget document is written in such a way that it is difficult for the average person to understand what a line item necessarily refers to as the line items don't always match the descriptions provided on previous pages and there is often a lack of information in the descriptions.

Hence I have a number of questions about the proposed increases in the budget that may be a simple misunderstanding (but may not), mostly on the operating side:

In a time where people are struggling, it appears that Council is giving itself a 8.41% raise in 2026 and proposing a 19.49% increase in 2027. Is this correct? What is the rationale for a 28% increase over two years?

Can you please explain why the strategic real estate expenditure is proposed to increase by 16.97% in 2026.

What is the 7.2% increase for the Victoria conference center expenditures for, including 17% for retail stores and 25% for sales?

Why is stormwater utility expenditures expected to increase by 8.23% and the sanitary sewer expected to increase by 16.64% next year (both unrelated to transfer to capital reserve)?

I note the increased transfers to utility capital reserve accounts. Good! I am supportive of the ongoing work to upgrade our utility infrastructure.

Why are the debt repayments and interest expense transfers to reserve almost tripling over the next four years? (page 58)

What is the rationale to more than double the 'contingencies' expenditure from 4.3m in 2025 to 9.5M in 2026 and up to 22.8M in 2030? What is this for?

What is the nature of the 8.76% budget increase for the public library?

Can you tell me what is included in "public realm enhancements and surface asset renewal" for \$4.95m in 2027 (page 76).

Thank you

From:
Subject: 2026 budget comments
Date: January 15, 2026 at 3:31 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

First, the amount of detail in presentation of the draft budget is impressive.

For the layperson, the task of assessing all the numbers and doing a comparison is a full time job which would take more time than most people have available, especially if some of the comparison data over a time frame needs to be researched and put into a spread sheet in order to do meaningful comparison. I do not have that time, nor do I think, that the time I put in would result in any meaningful changes into the proforma as it is from only one voice. Plus I have a business degree and understand financial statements.

The reality, regardless of PR spin (based on separation of Victoria operations with the police budget) is a tax increase of 10.4%.

A quick assessment shows that a large amount of the operations increase comes from increased by-law enforcement. Bylaw enforcement is 2.5 percent of the entire operation's budget. I wish that I could benefit from bylaw enforcement, especially in making my community safer. Tents are up in and around the Fernwood area, around the Crystal Pool area and the Rock Bay area for days without being taken down. Private Property in Fernwood and other areas close to supported housing is not safe, particularly at night. You would say

this is a policing issue, but in the case of homeless, this is a shared role between bylaw and police.

I have no qualms with the increase in the police budget, but the reason for this is the neglect in previous years. Why in this election year, has policing become an accepted budget increase item.

Another big expenditure item is corporate. The increase is 9 million dollars. Five million dollars is spent is in community grants, which is at par to 2025 expenses. The city provides financial support to over 200 agencies and organizations. Where is the breakdown of the 9 million dollars additional spending? What is corporate resources. I try to read the explanation and it is a

word salad. I think at least 9 million dollars can be saved here. My guess the majority would be in salaries.

The youth bus pass should be based on need, similar to the bus pass for low income people. Why do we not provide the bus pass for seniors, using the same criteria as for youth?

In summary, the city staff has grown from about 800 in 2020 to over 1000 in 2025. What were the roles that were created over the 5 years. Let's be strategic and eliminate about 5 percent. That would save about 5 million dollars. For example, how many people does it take to administer 200 grants? What is the protocol for firefights for emergency calls. Do we have a triple response for all

calls. I understand a large number of calls are for overdose situations? Perhaps we can streamline responses to either EMT or firefighters with police backup. We need to maintain good service with less resources. Let's work smarter. When assessing the budget data like in this paragraph is not readily available. Why do we need firefights for overdose calls. The EMT budget is provincial, so that would free up money to be spent on Police services and bylaw services which are focused on community protection and safety.

I notice that in the consultations many people talked about the high cost of housing. I ask, how can the city, other than diverting costs for permits and approvals impact the

cost of housing. This is not a municipal issue. Victoria has a much larger share of renters than other municipalities. I ask why does Victoria have the largest share of renters in comparison to property owners when rents would be less expensive in municipalities which have lower land costs. The cost of housing is an important issue for many folks, but it is really not an issue that the municipality can do anything about. I do understand the province has mandated municipalities to be look at ways to increase housing opportunities.

In closing, the 10.5% budget increase is not acceptable. I have noted methods in the short-term and long-term to reduce the costs. (employee reductions Emergency

(employee reductions, emergency support services, grant funding and other funding under corporate).

I say this as I look at the budgets for other municipalities which are considerably less, and you know who they are or at least you should know the budget creases for other municipalities.

If I had more time, I would be able to dig deeper. I feel some items like People and Culture, could be clearer and more detailed. I would also like to know the amount of staff in relation to each of the broad base of budget items.

I feel as if I get nothing from the city budget. I ride my bike, but was very comfortable with my routes before the bike paths. There are

BEFORE THE BIKE PATHS. THERE ARE
virtually no programs for seniors,
that I am aware of; if programs
exist the price is expensive for me.
I used to enjoy the boulevard
flowers, but they no longer exist,
now you are taking away the flower
baskets. Driving in the city is one
endless detour, and for that
experience, I get to pay an increase
in my property tax to support a 10.5
increase.

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget Draft
Date: January 9, 2026 at 2:58 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Johnson Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live. Venues close yearly, and newly opened ones struggle without support from city grants and funds. Victoria is a city that was once defined in large part by its arts scene, and budgetary choices like this further gut that identity.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

If you're not funding arts, housing, or care for mental health and addiction, what are you funding? What will the increase in police really do other than increase conflict and division on the streets, while officers patrol empty store fronts and silent art venues, frightening away sleeping and desperate people?

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Resident of Victoria

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget Feedback
Date: January 13, 2026 at 10:57 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good morning,

I read through the proposed budget for 2026, along with a proposed increase of property taxes in the amount of 10.44%.

I would like to know the specifics on why Council's budget is set to increase by 8.1%. That seems to be, outside of policing, the highest increase in the City's budget. I think as Constituents we should be privy to the specifics of why Council's budget is set to increase by that much. In a time when the City is actively reducing revenue streams (ie/ parking spaces in the downtown core) and our utility bills are increasing while services are going down, why are Constituents being asked to foot the bill through ever increasing tax rates. Is the increase to provide direct pay increases to members of Council? Is this increase required for implementation of services and programs that will directly benefit constituents? I think we deserve answers on that piece.

As a long time Constituent, and property owner within the Greater Victoria area, I would like more clarity on Council's need for an increase of budget that almost equates to the property tax hike.

Thank you,

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget Proposal
Date: January 11, 2026 at 5:43 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Villance St. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live. Especially as a city that gains so much of its economy from tourism, disabling our arts and culture will only further reduce our incomes.

I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs. Years of increased police presence and inhumane sweeps is clearly showing no effect on making the homeless population any smaller, and is only causing people to remain stuck in these situations and causing deaths. We need money to be allocated to programs that will actually help people off the street and police forces beating them back down is counterintuitive.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Victoria BC

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget
Date: December 12, 2025 at 9:35 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Staffing is the City’s largest cost item, and the largest growth has been in the People and Culture Department. I suggest that you closely examine whether all those positions are required for City operations. In 2021 the budget was \$2.35M, and in 2026 the proposed budget is \$5.36M. An increase of more than \$3M since 2021 is crazy.

2021 budget was \$2.35M:

People and Culture

Budget Summary	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	Change	% Change
Revenues/Funding Sources					
One Time	0	25,000	125,080	100,080	400.32%
Total	0	25,000	125,080	100,080	400.32%
Expenditures/Transfers to Reserve					
Health, Safety and Wellness	736,776	948,290	1,266,510	318,220	33.56%
People and Culture Administration	1,614,777	2,100,600	2,947,680	847,080	40.33%
Base Budget	2,351,553	3,048,890	4,214,190	1,165,300	38.22%
One Time	0	129,280	125,080	(4,200)	(3.25%)
Total	2,351,553	3,178,170	4,339,270	1,161,100	36.53%
Net Base Budget	(2,351,553)	(3,048,890)	(4,214,190)	1,165,300	38.22%
Five Year Forecast					
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Expenditures/Transfers to Reserve					
Health, Safety and Wellness	1,266,510	1,521,930	1,552,380	1,583,410	1,615,090
People and Culture Administration	2,947,680	3,567,610	3,638,970	3,711,710	3,785,900
Total Expenditures/Transfers to Reserve	4,214,190	5,089,540	5,191,350	5,295,120	5,400,990
% Change		20.77%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Net Base Budget Total	(4,214,190)	(5,089,540)	(5,191,350)	(5,295,120)	(5,400,990)

2026 proposed budget is \$5.36M:

People and Culture

Budget Summary	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Change	% Char
Revenues/Funding Sources					
Health, Safety and Wellness	6.867	0	0	0	0.0

People and Culture Administration	8,000	0	0	0	0.0
Base Budget	14,867	0	0	0	0.0
One Time	0	11,300	0	(11,300)	(100.0)
Total	14,867	11,300	0	(11,300)	(100.0)
Expenditures/Transfers to Reserve					
Health, Safety and Wellness	1,235,178	1,423,700	1,389,670	(34,030)	(2.3)
People and Culture Administration	3,614,793	4,007,500	3,975,500	(32,000)	(0.8)
Base Budget	4,849,971	5,431,200	5,365,170	(66,030)	(1.2)
One Time	0	11,300	0	(11,300)	(100.0)
Total	4,849,971	5,442,500	5,365,170	(77,330)	(1.4)
Net Base Budget	(4,835,104)	(5,431,200)	(5,365,170)	(66,030)	(1.2)
Five Year Forecast					
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Expenditures/Transfers to Reserve					
Health, Safety and Wellness	1,389,670	1,392,490	1,395,350	1,398,260	1,401,120
People and Culture Administration	3,975,500	3,983,480	3,991,620	3,996,720	4,005,000
Total Expenditures/Transfers to Reserve	5,365,170	5,375,970	5,386,970	5,394,980	5,406,120
% Change		0.20%	0.20%	0.15%	0.2
Net Base Budget Total	(5,365,170)	(5,375,970)	(5,386,970)	(5,394,980)	(5,406,120)

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget - Appalling Increase to VicPD Funding
Date: January 23, 2026 at 12:19 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc: malto@victoria.ca

Good afternoon,

My name is _____ and I'm a Victoria resident, residing on Gorge Road. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department (including the hiring of 25 more officers) as well as the increase to bylaw services (which is approximately an 80% increase). This amount constitutes almost 1/4 of the total budget for 2026, and requires the city to cut funding for absolutely essential programs to our citizens and community.

I know that many people, including myself, are concerned about safety in the city of Victoria. However, increased police and bylaw presence are not the answer to these problems. Increased police presence (including the new "Dedicated Beat Team") only stands to stoke more fear, hatred, and stress in the city. Police officers do not promote community wellness and healing. Police officers do not help those who need it. Police officers protect property, and we need a city council who is willing to invest in PEOPLE. I've seen VicPD officers speak absolutely horrendously to people without any cause to do so. I've seen VicPD officers be rude or refuse to help those who ask for assistance (or even ask a question!). I've seen VicPD officers sit in their cars and watch vehicles run red lights and almost strike pedestrians. Investing in VicPD is no investment in community safety, it is an investment in property protection and nothing more.

The Victoria Police Department is the most expensive police department (per capita) in the province. There has already been a multi-million dollar investment made to VicPD and bylaw services in 2025 as a part of the "Community Safety and Well-Being" plan, which made no investment in real community safety or well-being. Bylaw officers and police officers alike harass, traumatize, and treat people as less-than-human when dealing with folks who are sheltering on the streets and in parks. The way that the police and bylaw treat these people is absolutely abhorrent and disgusting, as does the way that Marianne Alto speaks about them. These are not "problems" that we need to "take our streets back" from. These are human beings who are struggling, and who need the assistance of their city and community to heal and get back on their feet.

In addition to the concerns outlined in the previous two paragraphs, I would like to specify which budget cuts I find the most outright concerning and beyond disappointing:

- an 18% decrease to the Arts, Culture, and Events budget
- a 4.3% decrease to the Neighbourhoods budget
- a 10% decrease to the Climate Action budget (I can't even believe this would be a consideration in this day and age when we are faced with extreme weather events multiple times a year)
- an 8.4% decrease to the Citywide Planning budget
- a 3.1% decrease to the DEI budget
- an 8.3% decrease to the Community Grants budget

These programs are incredibly important to the safety, well-being, and FUTURE of our city and community. We desperately need to invest MORE into these programs, into mental health services, into housing, into libraries and shared spaces, into businesses in our downtown core that are staples in the community (that are being primarily driven out by increased rental prices, not by homeless people on their doorstep).

I voted for Marianne Alto in 2022. I was excited to see her take office, I was excited for the future of our city. Ever since, she has been nothing but a profound disappointment to me. The city council as a whole has been nothing but a profound disappointment to me.

Please, I'm begging that the city reconsider this proposed budget and really examine and think about what programs require REAL investment to improve the safety, security, and well-being of Victoria city residents. I will be voting in the 2026 municipal election, and I will be paying close attention to your decisions in these next few months. Make the right choices. We are screaming for it.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget - Public Input Opportunity
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:24 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____, and I am a Victoria resident living in the neighbourhood of Hillside-Quadra. I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed police budget increase. The Victoria police budget is already the highest per capita in the entire province, and this proposed further increase would involve major cuts to areas which make Victoria such a vibrant and liveable city including arts and culture, parks, libraries, other social services, and our public transit. In addition, I have significant concerns with the Victoria P.D.'s use of their current budget in terms of civic efficiency and use of taxpayers' money. The department was given a 10% budget increase just last year, as well as millions of dollars in bonus city funding last summer, and at a time when many other city departments were forced to make cuts, the Victoria P.D. billed about one million extra dollars of taxpayer money just in overtime pay. Clearly, public safety, or the perception of public safety, is an issue in our city, but I do not believe that the best way to address it is with another major police budget increase especially given the, frankly, irresponsible way the department has handled their budget up to this point and I do not wish to see the very things that make this city great compromised to meet the demands of a single inefficient city department.

Thank you for allowing public input on this matter. I hope these concerns will be taken into account and that the council will act in the best interest of all Victorians.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: 2026 Dratt Budget comments
Date: January 7, 2026 at 12:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Thanks for taking the time to consider feedback about the draft budget.

Budget Efficiencies in Staffing? Review Would Be Welcome

While inflation has been high over the past few years, the anticipated budget increases have always been significantly higher, and this reflects in large part the city's commitments to policing, bylaw enforcement, and the library. However, staffing also merits attention: across all city departments, is there any possibility for reducing staffing through retirements and attrition?

Public Transparency and Downtown Issues

And is the city measuring whether changes in policy and budget allocations are working? **My request is for greater accountability: more public transparency and reporting around downtown disorder.** If we are going to be asked to pay more every year, we need to know what's working, and what justifies greater public investment.

As a city of Victoria resident, my first priority is the well-being of my neighbours and community, but it is disheartening to see steady erosion in some aspects of quality of life, especially when I was living downtown on Humboldt Street, where our building had to implement a number of measures to prevent people from setting fires and committing other acts of vandalism just outside the building and on the steps.

Addressing petty theft needs more attention from the city and the police. Many store owners now lock their doors. City hall has far more security than local business owners.

I've twice been accosted at outdoor bank machines, in one instance by a man who tried to grab my bank card and who pushed my friend. I spent ten minutes on the police non-emergency line, waiting, before giving up and hanging up. On several occasions I had to call 911 because of disorder on or near Pandora: a man screaming death threats to passersby; a woman who was unclothed and defecating while yelling obscenities; and a man who was jumping in and out of lanes of traffic. I'm not persuaded that the city's newly implemented efforts are making much difference when the province is not properly funding mental health and addictions care.

The Greater Victoria Public Library

The Central Branch of the library no longer feels like a pleasant place to spend time because it is functioning as a de facto social services site, and while this has been a trend for urban public libraries, it's having a noticeable impact on the young families, in particular, who depend on this branch. As you may know, the library has reduced Sunday hours, which it promised to implement late last year--but never did. This year, the library is promising only that there will be Sunday hours at the Central Branch starting this Sunday, although I note that their budget--and increase--factor in 7 months of Sunday afternoon hours at five branches. The library should provide some clarity about their intentions and they need to communicate more effectively with the public.

Other Municipalities Shirking Their Share of Costs and Responsibilities

For contrast, I'll just add that the backyard of the home I own is in Oak Bay, which has quietly shuffled all urban issues to the city of Victoria. I lived in Toronto when amalgamation was imposed by the provincial government, and that's not a model I support. But I will be in close contact with Oak Bay Council, who needs to take on a greater share of the burdens unequally distributed on the city of Victoria.

Manv thanks.

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Concerns
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:59 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Cook Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge the Mayor and Council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for myself and many others to find community and get a foothold in this city. Without them, we may be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with living experience of mental health challenges and involved in community programs supporting the unhoused community, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as a solution to make Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use substances.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands and instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who will vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions.

Thank you for your time.

Cook Street, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: 2026 draft budget feedback
Date: January 19, 2026 at 12:00 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

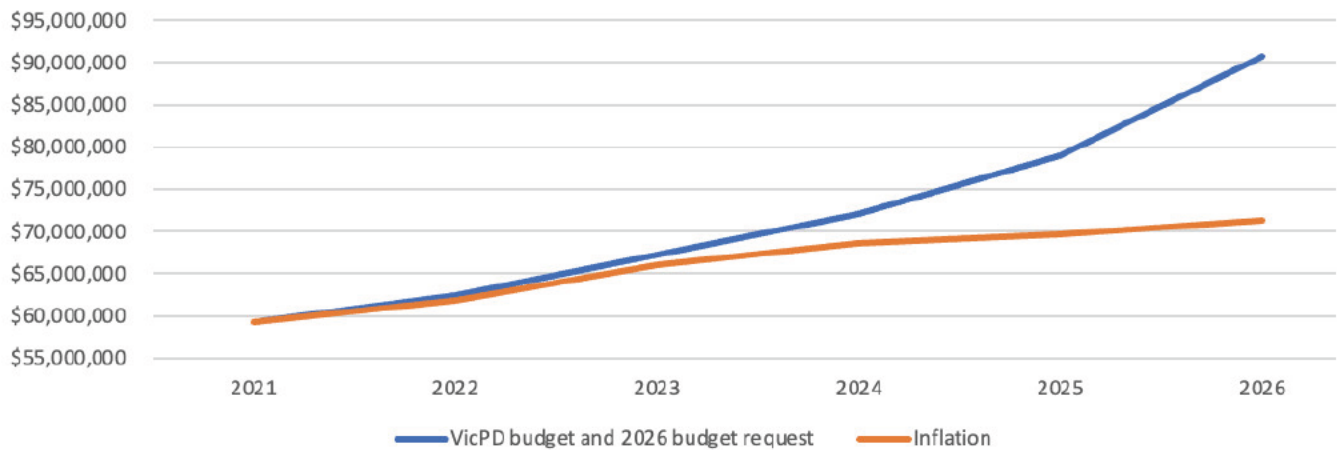
I am writing to oppose VicPD's 2026 draft budget and uncontrolled police spending in Victoria. I oppose the entire proposed increase, but I have also suggested \$6.6 million in realistic, specific items to cut.

Background

If VicPD is successful in its current funding request, the cost of policing in Victoria will be \$750 per capita in 2026, a 45% increase in just five years, compared to \$517 in 2021.

VicPD's budget request represents a 52% increase in total funding over the same time period, \$19 million above inflation.

VicPD budgets and 2026 budget request, vs. inflation



I attend the annual joint police board and council budget presentations, and every year one or more councillors asks some variation of "when will it be enough," or "will it be a smaller request next year." The respective answers are "it will never be enough," and "no, it won't."

Successive councils have thrown millions at VicPD every year, but homelessness and poverty, the source of public discomfort, poverty-based crime, and a lack of safety for people who are unhoused, haven't disappeared. The police board even blames its new budget request on things like "the opioid crisis," "mental health crises," and "substance use," indicating the city should be investing in and lobbying for safe supply and mental health resources, not police.

Policing is a failed project that has achieved none of its promised results. If city council is interested in public safety, it is past time for the city to move on, and to shift its focus to meaningful supports.

If the city takes the money councils have been willing to spend on police and instead spends it on things like housing or rental subsidies, you will achieve far better results. VicPD's requested \$11 million budget increase alone could cover rent for 449 people in one-bedroom apartments. That's 25% of all people who are homeless in the CRD, according to the 2025 point-in-time count.

I've suggested items to cut from VicPD's draft budget below.

1. Rejected financial analyst from 2023 budget (\$100,000+, page 49)

- Esquimalt council rejected a financial analyst position from VicPD's 2023 budget. This decision was upheld by the province on appeal as it determined VicPD did not provide "sufficient evidence to support the need."
- VicPD has brought it back in this budget, listed in a footnote on page 49 as a "reclassification."
- The province ruled VicPD could not prove the position was needed. VicPD has made no attempt to do so here, but they are still asking the city to pay for it.
- In the 2023 budget, VicPD listed the ongoing cost of the position as \$100,000.

Suggestion: Ask VicPD how much its 2026 financial analyst position costs. Reject that amount (\$100,000 or more) from the Financial Services expenditures, as it's the position the province agreed to reject from the 2023 draft budget. It does not matter that it's a "reclassification" as VicPD cannot prove the need.

reclassification, as VicPD cannot prove the need.

2. Reserve funds (\$1,450,000+, page 30, 31)

VicPD may be adding funds to its reserves even when not required, e.g., when it's not required to meet retirement payouts. The province agreed that this could be rejected from the 2023 budget.

Suggestion: After considering VicPD's total reserve funding across all categories, at a minimum, reject VicPD's \$1,450,000 capital contribution for 2026.

3. Victoria and Esquimalt Police Board (\$100,000 on strategic planning and \$64,735 on board costs, page 27)

- The police board has not demonstrated a need for \$100,000 in strategic planning costs.
- If you subtract the proposed \$100,000 in strategic planning, the police board's proposed budget will have still increased to \$258,940, a 232% increase since 2021 and a 130% increase since 2023.
- The police board budget's explosive growth cannot solely be attributed to having a full complement of appointees.
- Cutting the police board's base budget by 25% would save \$64,735.

Suggestion: Cut \$100,000 in strategic planning costs and \$64,735 in police board costs.

4. Logistics coordinator (\$133,299, page 49)

- The province's decision on VicPD's requested 2023 additions to its financial services division found they were not needed to provide adequate and effective policing and that the police board "did not provide sufficient evidence to support the need."
- The new logistics coordinator position can be cut for the same reason.

Suggestion: Ask VicPD to provide the exact dollar figure associated with the logistics coordinator position. Cut the logistics coordinator position to save approximately \$133,299.

5. Public affairs staff (\$97,263, page 46)

- VicPD is proposing a \$708,230 budget for its public affairs department.
- VicPD's public affairs budget allows it to dominate media narratives, shape public opinion, and influence budget demands.
- VicPD's 2024 SOFI report notes that one civilian communications position cost VicPD \$97,263 in remuneration and expenses.

Suggestion: Ask VicPD how many staff are in its public affairs department. Cut at least one position. If VicPD doesn't provide costs, cut \$97,263 based on 2024 SOFI information.

6. Internally hosted AI system (cost unknown, page 14)

- VicPD describes a previously undisclosed "Internal AI Development Project."
- The trend to adopt AI systems comes with real risks.
- VicPD did not budget for this work in its 2025 budget and provided no justification for it, but the city has nevertheless paid for it.
- It's unlikely VicPD could prove the need of this new system to the province.

Suggestion: After VicPD identifies the past and ongoing costs of the program, cut those costs from VicPD's 2026 budget.

7. Nine bike and beat unit officers (\$1,607,630, page 5)

- VicPD is the best funded police force per capita in B.C.
- There are 56 policing jurisdictions in Canada with over 100,000 people, a threshold used by Statistics Canada to compare policing statistics.
 - According to Statistics Canada's [most recent figures](#), only Thunder Bay and Montreal have more officers per capita than VicPD.
 - According to [FBI data](#), VicPD has more officers per capita than 82% of U.S. police jurisdictions.
 - VicPD's claims that its policing situation is unique as a "downtown" police force cannot hold true across the entire country or the United States.
- The city's Community Safety and Wellbeing plan incorrectly associates police with community safety.
 - According VicPD's own use of force reports, VicPD injures someone every 2.5 days and injures one person in

- According to VicPD's use of force reports, VicPD injures someone every two days and injures one person in crisis a week.
- VicPD has killed several people who were in crisis.
- Despite their internal policies, VicPD continues to use police cars to hit people on foot and on bikes who pose no active threat.
- More police officers will not keep people safe. This money could be far better spent on community resources that support people directly.

Suggestion: City council should reconsider its commitment to hire nine officers and remove those proposed officers from the budget (\$1,607,630).

8. Eight crime reduction unit officers (\$1,241,120, page 43)

- See above. This money could be better spent on community resources.

Suggestion: Cut the proposed eight crime reduction unit officer positions for \$1,241,120.

9. Four patrol officers (\$797,390, page 37)

- See above. This money could be better spent on community resources.

Suggestion: Cut the proposed four patrol officer positions for \$797,390.

10. Four traffic officers (\$797,390, page 40)

- VicPD's traffic enforcement includes the risk of police violence.
 - From 2018-21, VicPD filed 57 use of force reports related to traffic incidents, including 13 where VicPD says they hurt someone.
- VicPD's traffic enforcement is not neutral. Its traffic enforcement targets Black, Hispanic, Middle Eastern and South Asian drivers.
 - From 2016 to 2021, Black people made up 2.43% of people in VicPD's "driver" category in its general occurrence reports, despite making up only 1.43% of the population;
 - Hispanic people were 1.14% of "drivers" compared to 0.89% of the population;
 - Middle Eastern people were 2.65% of "drivers" compared to 1.12% of the population; and
 - South Asian people were 4.87% of "drivers" compared to 1.97% of the population.
- VicPD can also reassign officers to other roles with no oversight from council. There is no guarantee any new traffic officers will stay traffic officers.
- You can and should have traffic safety [without police](#).

Suggestion: Reject the four new traffic officer positions and invest that money in real road safety measures. For example, reinvest in the crosswalk budget the city proposed cutting. Traffic officers won't save lives, but more lit, signaled, marked crosswalks can.

11. Vehicle cost increase associated with 25 new officers (\$250,000, page 31), plus hiring costs

Suggestion: For each new officer rejected, ensure \$10,000 in associated vehicle costs are included in the amount rejected.

Suggestion: For each new position cut from the draft budget, ensure VicPD indicates the proposed hiring costs associated with that new position, and cut that amount as well.

Additional items to cut

If council would like to take a firm step towards reimagining community safety, while also bringing VicPD's staffing levels under control, I have listed another \$12.8 million in potential cuts below. I do not expect council to adopt this vision this year, but I present these options to show that a different world is possible.

12. School liaison officers (\$512,630, page 53 and 25)

- The Human Rights Commissioner found there is no independent evidence of a need for SLOs that cannot be met through civilian alternatives.
- Rejecting the officers would support 2SLGBTQ+ SD61 students who said they were harmed by SLOs, and force VicPD to prove the need for those officers if the police board chooses to appeal.

Suggestion: Reject \$511,130 in costs for officers (page 53) and \$1,500 for supplies (page 25).

13. Salaries and benefits (\$12,324,000, page 26)

- In addition to rejecting all 25 proposed new hires, to bring VicPD down to the national average of officers per capita for cities with over 100,000 people, VicPD would have to cut 79 officers from its existing complement.
- At an average cost of \$156,000 per officer in 2024, you could cut \$12.324 million in costs. There may be additional savings in other categories (e.g., equipment).
- The city could immediately invest that money in other supports and trial alternative community safety measures while the amount is likely appealed by the police board.

Suggestion: Cut VicPD's existing complement of officers by 79 positions. VicPD may have to provide the exact dollar figure associated with these cuts, but it would save approximately \$12.324 million in remuneration alone.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope the city will identify items to cut from VicPD's draft 2026 budget, including existing budget items.

Sincerely,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: 2026 draft budget input
Date: January 12, 2026 at 5:32 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Ridge Road. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

I believe this increase is not a good use of funds whatsoever.

As a renter, I urge the Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

Additionally, as someone working as a mental health worker in shelters and supportive housing in Victoria, I do not want to see more money being poured into the police department rather than community and social services. I have firsthand seen so many negative interactions between police and vulnerable people, and I would like to see funds being invested in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I urge you to reconsider this. I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria resident.

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Public Input
Date: January 14, 2026 at 10:45 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear City Councillors,

I'm writing to oppose VicPD's draft 2026 budget. VicPD receives a disproportionate amount of municipal funding at the expense of community and social services that keep people safe.

Please reject the proposed 2026 budget increase for VicPD, including the hiring of 25 new officers. I would also encourage you to look for opportunities to reduce the existing police budget to further invest in community supports and services.

For example, VicPD's proposed increase to "address the root causes of crime, including mental health, addiction, and homelessness" could and should be spent on actual mental health professionals that could support our unhoused neighbours instead of criminalizing them for living in an unjust society. The criminalization of unhoused peoples is a great stain on this city. The millions of dollars that VicPD is asking for could go towards building sustainable affordable housing for our citizens.

Furthermore, we should be working on improving access to essential services for community members. Why do we provide free or heavily subsidized car storage in our city but no where for people who desperately need housing to live?

Please consider using these vital funds on improving the lives of community members rather than adding to an already bloated VicPD budget.

Sincerely,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 8, 2026 at 4:35 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm disappointed by the City of Victoria's proposed 2026 budget. I'm all for increasing taxes to provide services to for our community. I want more funding for libraries, biking infrastructure, housing projects, food security and events that support art and connection. I'm gutted by the 5.02% proposed increase to the policing budget. Investing in community services makes the community safer and prevents crime. Having more cops in the city makes things less safe. VicPD is already the most expensive police department per capita in B.C.

I urge you to change course and cut funding to the VicPD by 5.02% instead of increasing it. Invest the money you'd save in building a community we can all be proud of.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: 2026 Dratt Financial Plan Feedback
Date: January 20, 2026 at 8:29 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good morning,

I, and the overwhelming majority of my peer group wholeheartedly reject the Financial Plan's proposal to increase Vic PD's budget by 14%.

We instead demand that it is decreased annually by 5% every year until 2030, and that recuperated funds are allotted to harm reduction, housing, and general city services.

Thank you.

Victoria resident and disgusted onlooker)

From:
Subject: 2026 Financial Plan Draft
Date: January 8, 2026 at 2:43 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there,

My name is _____, and I am a Victoria resident living on Queens Avenue. I am emailing to write that I AM OPPOSED to the proposed increase to Victoria Police Department's annual budget, and the hiring of 25 additional police officers.

I am appalled by the city's decision to cut arts and culture funding, while providing a huge budget increase to VicPD. Strengthening community spaces is what improves safety and well-being, not police.

As a renter, I would urge Mayor and Council to redirect funds from the police budget towards affordable housing programs, community grants, and tenant assistance instead of reducing funding in these areas. I find it distressing that a city with such a high cost of living would prioritize police funding over affordability for its residents.

As a mental health professional, I know that increasing police presence is not the solution to make Victoria safer! Police and bylaw officers harass and traumatize disadvantaged residents in our city who are doing their best to survive and who have nowhere else to go. We need to invest in alternatives to police to address the root causes of homelessness, addiction, and crime. For example, the Crisis Response Community Led (CRCL) team (<https://avi.org/service/crcl/>), local shelters, community mental health support, and improved accessible housing options for disadvantaged residents of Victoria.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time

From:
Subject: 2026 Financial Plan Feedback
Date: January 8, 2026 at 12:12 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To Whom It May Concern,

I am deeply disturbed by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." As a harm reduction worker and researcher, I know that police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness, such as giving people a warm place to sleep and safe places to use drugs.

As a renter, I would also like to urge the Mayor and Council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes reducing funding for community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs, including tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for many of my peers to find community and stay housed in this city. Without these programs, many people would be forced to leave their communities and relocate due to cost barriers.

The police do not need more money; the people do.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: 2026 Victoria Budget - My Two Cents
Date: January 22, 2026 at 4:04 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To Victoria City Council,

As a student journalist at the University of Victoria, I have written extensively on the community supports and resources available in our area.

It is with this knowledge that I am inclined to say that the Victoria Police Department is not in need of extra City funds when existing resources for Victoria residents are already failing. I would like to see investments into our communities, **including** the citizens of Canada and Victoria living on Pandora, Vancouver, and Princess.

I am rather done seeing poor, ineffective responses to people in need by state agents who claim they help and then turn around and ask for millions when people cannot **eat, live, or sleep** comfortably in the city Council claims they care about. Maintaining a thriving economy can wait when wellbeing and a health crisis are on the line.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: 2026 Victoria City budget
Date: January 16, 2026 at 3:18 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Sirs:

1. The combined city and police budget should be capped at the rate of inflation (i.e. ~3%, not ~10%) in total.
2. The city budget includes several nice-to-have-but-not-necessary items like a city poet laureate. Remove them.
3. The city budget seems to have room for councillor's pet projects (e.g. renovating Centennial Square) that the general public does not support. Axe them.
4. The city budget seems to have room for flights of fancy (e.g. buying real estate like Hermann's Jazz Club or commercial sites). Remove the room and promise not to indulge your whims in future.
5. Don't try to save money by postponing/ignoring maintenance. Over the long term, you're not saving money. That is your job.
6. Cut city personnel employment back to the employee numbers of 2018. The size and complexity of the city hasn't changed enough to justify the big increase in payroll.

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Draft Budget
Date: January 3, 2026 11:58:03 AM

I would like to see the city stick to the basics of infrastructure and maintenance. We are spending too much money on arts, culture, reconciliation and provincial responsibilities. We are in a time of budget restraints and the nice to haves should be off the list. Individuals in the community can support the nice to haves if they are important to them. They can organize fundraising. I as a taxpayer who is on a fixed income am seeing it getting harder and harder to pay for the property taxes and utilities payments each year. This council should stick to the core operations of the city and stop with their own individual beliefs and ideologies when making decisions on the budget. I appreciate and thank them for their service on council but do not agree with their decisions that don't stick to core operations.

Thank you

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Budget comms
Date: January 6, 2026 11:21:24 AM

New math?

A 5.42 per cent tax increase is currently proposed for the City's portion of the budget, investing \$384.1 million in operating costs and \$84.5 million in capital improvements to deliver more than 200 programs and services the community relies on. When combined with the Police Department's 5.02 per cent increase request, the total proposed tax increase is 10.44 per cent.

Did the chief finance officer approve this wording?

Budget 2026

Like all other organizations, a periodic review of priorities is now required to bring city costs in line with taxpayer's expectations, in line with inflation – i.e. Sub 5%.

Review all grant programs looking to remove any redundancies in programs, operational parallels and staffing.

Review all management positions to align management/staff ratios to Canadian averages and remove any staffing redundancies.

Reviewing the recent council salary increase, Incentive Council Renumeration to reflect reductions in city program costs. Align your remuneration with best practices across Canada.

Commit to follow all staff recommendations for program rationalization.

Victoria

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: FW: HAVE YOUR SAY: City of Victoria's 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 6, 2026 1:49:01 PM
Attachments:

Hi,

First of all, thank you for taking the time to read my concern.

The statement below is factually incorrect. I am not sure if this was an attempt to present the increase in a more favorable way, but you can not simply add increases to different portions of your budget and give a total increase. One of these numbers is wrong.

$(\text{non police portion of budget})(1.0542) + (\text{police budget})(1.0502) \neq (\text{non police portion of budget} + \text{police budget})(1.1044)$.

I hope this is clarified, because if I assume that the total increase of 10.44% is correct, and the police budget increase is correct, that would place the non police budget increase north of 12%. That is wildly different than what is written.

I hope I am simply missing something and am mistaken. Always happy to be corrected.

Sincerely,

Chris Watson
General Manager
Best Western Plus Carlton Plaza Hotel
642 Johnson St. Victoria, B.C., V8W 1M6

Direct Phone: 250-413-2190
Email: chris@bestwesterncarlton.com



From: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 10:18 AM
To: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Subject: HAVE YOUR SAY: City of Victoria's 2026 Draft Budget



2026 DRAFT BUDGET

Public Input Opportunity

Based on Council's initial budget deliberations, the City of Victoria's 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (2026 Draft Budget) has been updated and is now ready for public input.

Provide feedback in writing or by pre-recorded video **by January 23, 2026** to help inform Council's budget decisions.

A 5.42 per cent tax increase is currently proposed for the City's portion of the budget, investing \$384.1 million in operating costs and \$84.5 million in capital improvements to deliver more than 200 programs and services the community relies on. When combined with the Police Department's 5.02 per cent increase request, the total proposed tax increase is 10.44 per cent.

To inform the City's 2026 investment priorities, budget engagement to date has included an Ipsos telephone survey and community conversations co-hosted with six, equity-deserving organizations.

Public feedback will be shared with Council as they work to further reduce the City's portion of the tax increase.

Learn more and have your say at engage.victoria.ca.

Thank you,

Communications and Engagement Department
City of Victoria

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Proposed budget increase
Date: January 6, 2026 3:35:25 PM

Dear City of Victoria,

We do not support a 10.44% property tax increase.

Victoria

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 6, 2026 1:00:00 PM
Attachments: [Have Your Say.png](#)

Here's how to provide feedback on the updated 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (updated 2026 Draft Budget):

- **Submit written comments:**
 - Email: legislativeservices@victoria.c

I am very concerned about the proposed tax increase of over 10%, which is far beyond what many residents in Victoria can reasonably afford. At a time when income tax, housing, food, and utility costs continue to rise, this increase places an unfair burden on taxpayers.

The City appears to be prioritizing discretionary or optional projects instead of focusing on essential services and long-term financial sustainability. Large capital and “nice-to-have” projects should be cancelled when affordability is already stretched.

City staff compensation continues to exceed that of the provincial government, raising serious concerns about wage growth, staffing levels, and accountability. Combined with rising operating costs, this has resulted in the highest spending levels the City has ever seen.

There is a clear lack of cost control, efficiency review, and willingness to say no to projects the City simply cannot afford. Residents are being asked to pay more without seeing meaningful efforts to reduce expenses or improve value for money.

I am very disappointed with the City’s budgeting approach and urge Council to reconsider this tax increase, rein in spending, and focus on fiscal responsibility,

transparency, and affordability for residents.

Regards,

Sent from my iPhone

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 6, 2026 3:12:49 PM

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments on the budget. I appreciate the resources and summary documents that were provided, and I have tried to familiarize myself with them as much as I can.

Although it is difficult to fully understand all issues and line items, I am concerned with the significant increases in the Vic PD budget. I recognize that there are numerous social issues that are leading to increased public disorder, substance abuse and mental health issues, but I felt that the budget did not provide any real statistical information on number of calls or increases in crime. It seems that the Vic PD report simply says these are "increasing". I work downtown and live in the Jubilee hospital area, so I am well aware of what is happening. However, more information is needed to justify such massive increases.

Do you know where information on crime statistics, calls, etc. can be found? It would be helpful to know where the increases are going and why. I did a preliminary search for this data but was unsuccessful in finding it.

I also find it surprising that School Liaison officers are part of the police budget. Do you know where I can find more information on why these positions exist and if there is evidence of the value in these positions? I didn't realize this was something that was done in Canada.

For the Community Safety and Wellbeing plan, could you please clarify how this is funded? It looks like the city budget includes an additional \$3 million on top of the police budget. Is this accurate?

I recognize the value of the new plan, but if this is on top of the police budget increases, this is another massive increase to the police budget that is being placed/hidden under a different line item. For transparency, it seems that this should be reflected in the police budget. Or perhaps split across both?

It would have also be helpful if the City budget or the Vic PD budget provided more information on other ways that we are addressing substance abuse and mental health issues, as policing is obviously the last resort. Or explain how the city has been burdened with something that is out of our jurisdiction. Perhaps there is more information on this that I missed.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Budget Comments
Date: January 6, 2026 2:26:07 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2026 City of Victoria Budget.

1. I am not supportive of the giant increase to the police budget. Investment in other types of community safety and wellbeing programming and protections are a better use of money.
2. I am not supportive of the giant increase to the bylaw enforcement budget. While Bylaw is important part of keeping communities safe and clean, the number of times I have seen 5+ bylaw enforcement officers (and accompanying police officers) dealing with 1 person is absurd. Not only is it a poor use of human resource money, but I believe that approaching people who are infracting bylaws with that many personnel is so incredibly inhumane and intimidating.
3. I request an increase in the Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grant. There is so much effort put into maintaining these community spaces that goes uncompensated, community gardens are essential to the fabric of our communities.
4. I am in full support of money spent on the Victoria Public Library - Libraries are an essential third space, learning space, and community space.
5. I am in full support of the money spent on sustainable infrastructure improvements, mainly on maintaining and improving cycling lanes and bike parking. It keeps me, my family and friends feeling safer, more motivated and excited to ride my bike rather than drive

Victoria BC

From: [Mike Nugent](#)
To: [Engagement-External](#); [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: City of Vic 2026 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 6, 2026 2:30:12 PM

While its a difficult job produce a budget that stays at or below current inflationary numbers, its a job that must be done.

As a property tax payer in Victoria, I believe that historically the municipalities primary duty was to provide services need by all citizens within a reasonable budget allotment. What appears to be happening is the ever increasing list of non core requests, which are above and beyond core essentials. Simply put, if the money is not there, then only do the most needed core services. The proposed 10.44% increase for 2026 is unacceptable.

Mike Nugent

Nugent Properties Ltd

Victoria BC

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: City budget

From:
Sent: January 13, 2026 2:17 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: City budget

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Fort St. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person who works with those who are unhoused, experience mental health and substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

As a person who works with youth, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I care deeply about the people who live in Victoria and who struggle to thrive here. Working in non-profit organizations has shown me that we need more funding from the government. We need councillors who care about the work that we do and who we support. There are so many people that care so much and work so hard to keep people in our community safe. It does not feel like the government cares.

Please amend the proposed budget.

Sincerely,

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Budget deliberations - Crystal Pool

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 3:23 PM
To: Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAlto@victoria.ca>; Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Cc: Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Matt Dell (Councillor) <mdell@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca>; Susan Kim (Councillor) <skim@victoria.ca>; Krista Loughton (Councillor) <kloughton@victoria.ca>; Dave Thompson (Councillor) <dave.thompson@victoria.ca>
Subject: Budget deliberations - Crystal Pool

Mayor and council,

This is absolutely the right time to rethink the Crystal Pool replacement project. This is a big-ticket item that needs to be scrutinized. An expected 10.44% city of Victoria tax hike is simply unacceptable and way in excess of what other BC municipalities are facing.

As Stan Bartlett points out [in today's Times Colonist](#): "Five cities have already approved their budget for 2026, including Chilliwack (4.9%), Delta (2.9%), Langley City (5.82%), Kelowna (4.37%), and Coquitlam (3.37%)....Six other cities are working on their latest proposed budget increases, including the North Vancouver City (2.9%), Maple Ridge (3.5%), Nanaimo (6.3%), Richmond (3.04%), Kamloops (6.7%), Burnaby (4.8%), and Vancouver (0%)."

Obviously, big-ticket items should be in council's sights, not hanging flower baskets. It's time to scale back Crystal Pool plans to a more reasonable, affordable level for Victoria taxpayers. The Crystal Pool replacement referendum was approved by 58.7% of the only 21.1% of eligible citizens who voted, allowing Victoria to borrow up to \$168 million. But that shouldn't mean that council has to borrow and spend.

No option for repair was included in the pool referendum. Council, unfortunately, had decided to bypass that option. In fact, now is a great time to reconsider renovating the current pool instead of rebuilding. Please read [How much would it cost to fix Crystal Pool?](#) published in Focus on February 7, 2025. You will find reference to the Evoke Buildings Engineering report of March 2024, available in two parts: a [condition assessment](#) and a [capital plan](#).

The total cost for renovation noted in the report comes in at \$17.4 million, with more accurate estimates to be obtained once design, specifications and detailed tender documents were completed. A far cry from the \$215 million and counting that is anticipated for the rebuild. This report never got the consideration it deserved from council.

In a repair option, emissions and environmental impacts of an aging pool could certainly be addressed. Other important projects would not need to be sidelined. The landfill would not be burdened. Trees would not be lost. And a big bonus for the repair option is that renovation could be achieved with a number of short shutdowns that wouldn't deprive users for years at a time.

If council is genuinely concerned about taxpayers fearing a 10.44% increase this year, you would do well to reconsider the exorbitant cost of the Crystal Pool replacement project as it now stands. Reconsider renovation. At the very least, scale back the luxury rebuild you are promoting. Voters are watching and waiting for relief from sky-high tax increases.

Sincerely,

Victoria, BC

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: 2026 Draft Budget - feedback

From:
Sent: J
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget - feedback

Hi,
a 10.4% tax increase is unsustainable and crazy. Savings could be achieved by cutting top heavy positions at City hall, reducing the number of non-essential, i.e. non-front-line staff, and putting in place a moratorium on further bike lanes.

Regards,

VicWest

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: City of Victoria Draft Budget public input

From: Frances Litman <info@creativelyunited.org>
Sent: January 13, 2026 10:32 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Cc:

Subject: City of Victoria Draft Budget public input

Thank you for the opportunity to publicly comment on the City of Victoria's Draft Budget.

What appears to be missing from this draft budget are funds to protect, preserve and maintain our precious urban trees and a commitment to the City of Victoria's Urban Forest Master Plan and meaningful climate action.

The city must stop funneling public money to infrastructure projects that don't value natural assets, such as trees, and consider the excellent recommendations of this thoughtful toolkit produced by the Sierra Club for local governments:

Climate-Ready Communities Toolkit

<https://sierraclub.bc.ca/stories-events/reports-and-publications/climate-ready-communities-a-toolkit-for-local-governments/>

Please consider these **Urban Forest Policy Recommendations:**

- Strengthen and enforce the Tree Protection Bylaw to stop routine destruction of trees on both public and private land. Develop achievable tree canopy targets based on urban forestry best practices and equity amongst neighbourhoods.
- Require developers to consider alternatives to tree removal and ensure that tree removal is a last resort.
- Develop achievable tree canopy targets based on urban forestry best practices and equity amongst neighbourhoods.
- It's important to know what we have. Measure progress toward canopy targets, publicize LiDAR vegetation change detection metrics for Zoning Modernization Areas, neighbourhoods, and City-wide, each 4-year period that LiDAR vegetation surveys are updated. Adopt a City-wide Garry oak species detection as part of ongoing urban forest remote sensing updates.
- Ensure that Tree Reserve Funds, collected from developers who cannot replace trees, are applied where they are most needed. Create an Urban Forest Technical Advisory group with representation from community enviro, non-profit orgs, ecologists, biologists, and urban forestry experts including representatives specialized in urban arboriculture and Garry oak ecosystems.

- Large tree species are important for climate adaptation and public health. A 6-m backyard setback doesn't do enough to retain existing off-property trees near the property line, as well as trees outside of the building envelope, and substantially limits soil volume and above-ground growing space for large-at-maturity replacement trees. It also makes the “Minimum Required Trees Per Lot” excessively difficult to achieve when spacing requirements in the Tree Protection Bylaw (21-035) are applied. Therefore, increase all setbacks by a minimum of 2m for Landscape area/Plantable space (i.e., soil area for planting a large species of tree) in the Priority Growth and Residential Infill Zoning Areas.
- 75% of the urban forest exists on private property
- There has been no mapping and analysis of the overall Garry Oak Ecosystem or individual Garry oak trees on private property City-wide in over 20 years.
- The new land use class scheme was determined without a City-wide biodiversity assessment on private property, presenting an obstacle to stewardship and conservation.
- The tree canopy targets for Priority Growth residential zones (dark yellow) are only 25%, compared to 50% for Residential Infill zones (light yellow). This represents an inequity, for example, greater flood and associated property damage risk and an increased risk of heat-related illness for residents in the Priority Growth residential zone.
- Section 488(1) of the Local Government Act: Form & Character Development Permit Areas (DPAs) for all new housing: Include requirements for a) protecting the natural environment, its ecosystem and biological diversity. However, the General Urban Design guidelines were crafted by the construction industry in the absence of an Indigenous land manager, or licensed ecologists, biologists or foresters.
- Tree Protection Bylaw (21-035) has not been updated since Bill 44, and the Draft OCP, and cannot provide physical protection for existing trees when trees are located within a proposed building envelope.
- [Without more trees, BC's next heat dome could be even deadlier](#)

[The genius of trees](#)

- - [When heat and drought stress trees, the consequences can be tragi](#)

If in doubt as to the value of every tree left standing in our city, please take a moment to watch and share this informative 6-minute video made by the Halifax parks department: [A Tree for All Trades](#).

This film makes clear the fact that large, mature trees are exponentially more beneficial to communities than small trees.

Thank you for adding these comments to the public record.

On behalf of the Creatively United for the Planet board and community,



Frances Litman
Community Connector/Coordinator
on behalf of the [Creatively United For The Planet Society](#)



“The natural world is the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human. To damage this community is to diminish our own existence.”

— Thomas Berry



From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Draft budget comments

From:
Sent: January 13, 2026 7:56 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: Draft budget comments

Hello,

I oppose the increase for both the city portion and the police portion. Taxes have significantly risen like clockwork over the last few year and the property tax paid has gone up roughly 40% on my property in under ten years. The city needs to operate more like a private sector business and learn to cut where cuts are needed. Squeezing the already burdened citizens more and more is not the right path in my opinion.

For example, the "traffic calming measures" and bike lanes cost millions yet all they do is create delays and frustration for local business, citizens and tourists. We have enough bike lanes and traffic is already going at a snails pace. The modification at the end of Blanshard St. adds at least 3 minutes to commuters going through there. With more parking spaces being taken away to bike lanes and the already congested streets local businesses are leaving downtown Victoria. Try to envoce policies that make it easier for local businesses to thrive rather than burdening their potential customers with delays and waits.

The city also needs to work towards getting rid of the homeless population that plague the neighbourhoods of Pandora. This wasn't here 10 years ago, what's happened? Find permanent solutions and not half measures.

The 1.3M to advance the city's "low carbon effort" is a waste of money. Just replace like for like with hybrid or electric vehicles but don't bother accelerating at when fuel prices are low and are forecasted to be even lower.

As far as the police goes, they're in a tough spot with the catch and release laws the way they are. I don't think a budget increase is warranted until the laws change and the police can actually lock up the perputrators.

Regards,

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Comment on City Budget Proposal: VicPD

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 4:25 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: Comment on City Budget Proposal: VicPD

To whom it may concern,

My name is . I live in Fernwood, on Pandora Avenue. I work downtown at a local arts nonprofit and at a downtown retail store.

I have recently learned that a budget increase of 14% has been proposed for the VicPD. I am also aware that the budget for Arts, Culture, and Events may be cut by around 18%.

I do not feel unsafe downtown. Our unhoused community are my neighbours. What saddens me are the sweeps and increase in violence being perpetuated by our police force.

At a time when community is more important than ever, budget cuts to things like Arts and Culture are going to lead people to feel more isolated, desperate, and separate from the communities within which we live. A police budget will not help people find community, find housing, and find a sense of belonging.

Please reconsider.
Thank you,

From:
Sent:
To: Legislative Services email
Subject: Repeated call to reject VicPD's 2026 budget and reverse cuts to climate programs

Dear Councilors,

I'm writing to reiterate my opposition to VicPD's draft 2026 budget. This follows comments made by Mayor Alto and councilors reported by the Times Colonist on Dec 3rd, highlighting how VicPD's proposed budget is astronomically higher than what was expected. As it is, VicPD already receives a disproportionate amount of municipal funding at the expense of community and social services that keep people safe.

I would like to see council say "no" to VicPD's wasteful request, and make an evidence-based decision on police spending for the city. I've seen no evidence put forth by the VicPD that increasing its budget has led to a decrease in crime or better public safety, as it's had massive increases in the past several years that never seem to be enough, and the goalpost always seems to be moving. Conversely, I'm aware of a lot evidence from many Canadian municipalities that increasing police budgets does not lead to a decrease in crime or improved public safety, and that money is better spent elsewhere to achieve this, such as investing in communities and supporting community members who are at risk of being pushed towards criminal activity. I strongly believe that VicPD's budget request is not in the interest of Victoria residents like myself, and I urge you to oppose it and invest that money back into services and supports that actually reduce crime.

Please reject the proposed 2026 budget increase for VicPD, including the hiring of 25 new officers. I would also encourage you to look for opportunities to reduce the existing police budget to further invest in community supports and services.

I'm also displeased at cuts that have been made or proposed to the city's climate programs. Many councilors ran on climate platforms, and it's a betrayal to see these cuts being considered, without strong and clear opposition.

Thank you,

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Feedback on 2026–2030 Draft Financial Plan and Development-Driven Business Displacement
Date: January 13, 2026 11:28:29 AM

Dear Council members,

Council has repeatedly affirmed its commitment, through the Planning and Development Committee, to supporting complete communities, economic resilience, affordability, and the retention of a diverse mix of locally owned businesses within mixed-use and commercial areas. However, current development-led assessment practices and associated tax impacts are producing outcomes that run counter to those stated objectives. This submission responds directly to the City’s request for feedback on the 2026–2030 Draft Financial Plan and reflects on-the-ground operational impacts being experienced by small, independent businesses.

Staff routinely assess how development patterns and associated regulatory impacts affect the viability of existing uses and the achievement of Council’s objectives related to complete communities, affordability, and economic resilience. Development-driven assessment inflation that results in the displacement of small, independent businesses falls squarely within this scope.

Unsustainable development is actively decimating small, independent businesses in Victoria, and the City’s current tax and assessment framework is accelerating that outcome.

Last year my business absorbed a 21 percent increase in property taxes, driven entirely by rising assessments and City tax policy. The building I lease was reassessed from \$3 million to \$4.5 million, not because the business improved or expanded, but because of new development on our block.

Under a triple-net lease, these increases flow directly to tenants. A \$600 per month increase is not incremental. It is destabilizing. For a small, independent business, costs of this magnitude force immediate decisions regarding staffing, operations, and whether remaining in the city is viable at all.

Against this backdrop, the proposed 2026 total property tax increase of 10.44 percent is deeply concerning. While staff explored options to reduce the City’s portion of the increase to 4 percent, the current proposal still includes a 5.42 percent City increase, combined with a 5.02 percent increase for Victoria Police.

These increases are layered on top of already inflated assessments driven by development pressure. The cumulative effect is not theoretical. It is the steady erosion of small businesses that lack the margins of developers, institutional landlords, or national chains.

When development-driven assessment increases and repeated tax hikes are allowed to flow unmitigated to small tenants, those businesses are effectively treated as expendable. This outcome is not the result of market forces alone. It is a policy outcome.

If Council’s stated objective is to support complete communities and a resilient local economy, the current approach is failing. Without meaningful restraint or mitigation, continued development-driven assessment inflation combined with annual tax increases will result in further closures, increased commercial vacancy, and the replacement of locally

owned businesses with only those large enough to absorb volatility.

I am asking Council to state, clearly and on the record, whether it intends to intervene to protect small, independent businesses from development-driven displacement, or whether their loss is an acceptable cost of the City's current development and taxation strategy.

Sincerely,
Scott Wingfield

ART INK

p: 1-250-888-2621
Hours: Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri - 9:30am to 4:30pm PST
a: 604 Yates Street, 2nd Floor, Victoria, BC. V8W 1K9. Canada

w: www.artinkprint.ca

\$ Jan 14, 2026

Fernwood, Victoria

Dear Council and Mayor,

I'm writing to provide feedback on the 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan, in particular to call on you to reject Vic PD's requested 14% budget increase and the cuts to transportation, arts, planning, grants, and climate action that this would require.

Vic PD has been requesting ever-increasing budget expansions annually for years now, which council has always acquiesced to, despite a paucity of evidence that this has actually reduced crime or improved public safety. As an environmental scientist and small business owner, I expect policy at every level of government to be based on evidence and be fiscally prudent. Vic PD seems to expect this massive budget increase without demonstrating that funding them leads to positive outcomes for Victoria residents, and council has been disappointingly willing to fund them without clear evidence or metrics. To the contrary, I'm aware of a burden of evidence from municipal researchers and cities across Canada that increasing police budgets does not improve public safety or reduce crime, and that housing, healthcare and other public services must be funded instead to address the social causes that drive people to commit crimes. Furthermore, funding Vic PD has led to increases in violence and brutality on the most...

--- vulnerable Victorians, including members of our community who are experiencing homelessness, struggling with addiction and the poisoned drug supply, or facing other challenges as a result of the cost of living crisis here.

I adamantly believe that it is not in the interest of Victorians for council to accept the requested 14% budget increase from Vic PD, and I call on you to reject it and look for further opportunities to decrease Vic PD's overinflated budget, and instead reallocate funding to transportation, climate action grants, and the arts. I'm deeply disappointed to see cuts to these areas being entertained, and want to see my city rising to the occasion and responding to the moment. Passing your proposed 10.44% property tax increase will make it extremely difficult for me to continue living and running my business in Victoria, but half of this tax hike is just to cover what Vic PD is requesting, and I do not support this. This will remain a priority for me in the upcoming municipal election, and I hope councillors use this opportunity by amending the draft budget to reject Vic PD's budget increase.

Sincerely,

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Comments on 2026 Draft Plan

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 2:52 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Cc: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Comments on 2026 Draft Plan

Hello,

I am a full-time artist, renter, and tax-payer here in the beautiful city of Victoria. I am happy to call this land my home, and believe in the good that Victoria can accomplish. I am writing because I am vehemently opposed to the 14% increase in the VicPD, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, cutting funds to arts and culture by 18% will have a drastic impact on the livelihood of me and my peers. Victoria is celebrated for its arts culture, which we are slowly losing as artists are becoming increasingly unable to afford to live here. As a renter, it would be devastating to not have these funds redirected into affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget only decreases programs that actually make our city safer and livable. Without programs like these, myself and my peers may face having to move away from this city to find somewhere we can live and thrive.

Police and bylaw terrorizing and harassing people just trying to get back on their feet is not a solution. We need to invest in alternatives that actually help people, and not just punishing those who are facing the worst living conditions among us.

Do not get me wrong - I am concerned every day with public safety in Victoria. I also know that giving into whatever the police force wants is not the answer, and has NEVER been the answer. Invest these funds into our communities and programs that actually help people. We do NOT need more cops in our streets, we need housing and arts and community.

I am an avid voter, and decisions on this matter will greatly affect who I will be voting for.

Thank you for your empathy and understanding,

Cook Street, Victoria resident.

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Budget Feedback

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 2:43 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: Budget Feedback

54% of the operating budget for salaries and benefits. Wow. Where are the staff cuts and salary reductions? That should be the number one priority!

Victoria.
Sent from my iPhone

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Budget

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 2:21 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: Budget

My wife and I are homeowners in James Bay. We are both shocked by the continued escalation of property taxes in this city. The mayor and town councillors are elected to manage the city budget. The budgets they submit do not reflect prudent management. Elected officials annually raise taxes simply because they can. Homeowners are treated as a bottomless well for tax revenue. Both city governance and police administrators should effectively manage their operational budgets rather than demand more money in knee-jerk fashion every year. Bloated payrolls and useless expenditures should be regularly visited and pruned. Requests for community input are useless shows of alleged engagement. Our only recourse to address repeated malfeasance is at the ballot box. I notice that the mayor's tax rate is only being raised by a projected 8.74%.

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: 2026 Draft Budget Written Comment

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 3:02 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Written Comment

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Government Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, you are all personally responsible for the rising number of homeless people in Victoria to go up.

Additionally, I want to make the obvious point that the city of Victoria has tried the approach of upping police presence to try and address the issue of homelessness and safety in Victoria and it has failed abysmally. [The number of homeless people continues to climb](#) (link to CHEK news article from Sept. 2025), and instead of providing funding for proven methods to combat homelessness like affordable housing initiatives and investing in public welfare you are trying to combat the same issue with the same failed solution.

If you actually care about making Victoria safe as you claim, you would take the time to try a new method that has been proven to work in similar situations that is lead by those with lived experience, not keep swinging the same answer and hoping for a different outcome. Not only does it not work - as proven by the ridiculous increases that VicPD has achieved in the past years and still growing rates of homelessness in Victoria - these funding decisions are reducing the general public's access to spaces such as the library. This is a gross misuse of funds on behalf of all tax payers and community member of Victoria, and will be treated accordingly by your constituents. We are tired of our city councilors wasting money on \$20K+ parties for police officers, while we struggle to pay for housing and food.

If you decide to give VicPD a raise, I personally will not be voting for any councillors in support to be reappointed to their positions and will campaign in my community to replace the current councillors for representation that actually creates positive change.

Sincerely,

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: 2026 Draft Budget pt2

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 2:41 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget pt2

Hello,

I just want to say I am disappointed -- I just saw that VicPD has released a press release (<https://vicpd.ca/2026/01/13/victoria-police-department-reintroduces-dedicated-beat-team-to-strengthen-community-safety/>) which thanks the city for the "\$1.9 million dollar investment in this initiative through the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan"

but the budget has not been finalized, correct? It seems like perhaps the budget is going through no matter what...

Cheers,

Victoria, BC

On Mon, Jan 12, 2026 at 3:20 PM

wrote:

Hello,

I am again emailing to express my opposition to the proposed police budget. I have been unable to find any reasonable argument for the increased budget.

Looking at the "Special Committee of the Whole Meeting Report" for November 3, 2025, one component jumped out at me: "...there is clear support for Council's priorities in their Strategic Plan, with the top two priorities for attention and investment next year being Housing and Community Wellbeing and Safety." Now I understand that there is a belief that community wellbeing and safety have a causal relationship with police presence, but this is not accurate.

If the council is serious about these priorities, they will not spend more money on policing and instead will redirect the money towards direct solutions. The \$9,786,637—to be paid from the city budget for the proposed police budget increase—can do a lot if directed appropriately. Just look at the results from the Toronto Community Crisis Service pilot program: <https://www.toronto.ca/news/toronto-city-council-receives-toronto-community-crisis-service-mid-year-progress-report-confirming-positive-outcomes-community-impact/>

I call upon the council members to be leaders—to show that we can solve problems by thinking about and implementing solutions based on evidence rather than essentially buying a very expensive rug to try to cover the issues up.

Cheers.

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Comment on 2026 Draft Budget

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 7:33 AM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: Comment on 2026 Draft Budget

Good morning,

I would like to make a comment on the 2026 Draft Budget..

Many of the high profile "public safety" problems affecting the City are complex and multifaceted. They are caused by a wide range of issues, including lack of access to housing, affordable food and groceries, and access to healthcare, particularly mental healthcare and addiction services.

Tackling these issues requires a broad, multi-pronged approach involving a wide range of stakeholders and program types. More spending on Vic PD will do nothing to address these challenges. We cannot police our way out of these issues. A major increase in the police budget at a time of poly-crisis does not solve any of the underlying issues; it merely funds violence against those they affect.

Fernwood

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Budget Feedback

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 7:58 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: Budget Feedback

I am disappointed to see the city claw back its funding goals when most property owners can shoulder what is actually a relatively modest cash increase. With this in mind, I am even more disappointed to see no decrease whatsoever to the police request and do not support this approach to the budget.

I would far prefer to see the entire budget reduced by a commensurate amount to better balance needs - I understand the current focus on public safety, but a better resourced city is a better long term investment than more police on the streets.

Victoria

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: 2026 Draft Budget

From:
Sent: January 14, 2026 6:27 PM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget

I oppose the draft budget and the property tax increase of 10%+. This Mayor and Council have brought in large tax increases since their election, taxes they don't even pay as they live in Saanich and other neighbouring municipalities, but I see no improvement in services for Victoria's taxpayers.

Pandora Avenue remains as before, despite the fortune spent on ineffectual strategies like fencing. Our downtown is worse than ever. Business owners board up their storefronts in despair and fearful local residents do their shopping elsewhere.

Complaints to VicPD, bylaw services, parking services and animal control are ignored. Our laws go unenforced and unhoused people are emboldened to take up residence on Crown lands and private property. Tax payers who object are assaulted, cursed at and spat on.

Local infrastructure degrades with sea walls breaking apart, walking trails left unkempt, and public restrooms so filthy that few are prepared to use them. The only investment is in poorly designed bike lanes, costly planning for unwanted changes to Centennial Square, and salary hikes for the Mayor and Council.

Marion and the VDLC's Gang of Five bleat incessantly about shortfalls in federal and provincial funding, but then commit our tax dollars to services that should be provided by other levels of government. Victoria spends needlessly and recklessly, so why would the Premier and Prime Minister bother to fulfill their constitutional responsibilities?

As the federal and provincial governments finally put an end to failed social experiments like decriminalization and "safe supply", the Mayor and Council instead double down and insist that programs that enable drug use and fuel social disorder be given ever increasing amounts of money.

The election can't come soon enough.



dear Council,

please don't increase Police
Money... Here are some ideas to use
the money instead:

- More libraries + play grounds
- my mum to ride for free on the bus
- My dad to work less so we
can play
- not Having to find another
house... Houses for everyone



From:

8 $\frac{1}{2}$ years

Victoria

January 14, 2026

Dear Mayor Alts & City Council,

I'm writing to you today regarding Victoria's proposed budget. Specifically, I am disturbed and disappointed by the proposed increased budget for the Victoria Police Department.

Despite the copious amount of evidence of the harms of policing, I am disgusted that the Vic PD's budget has grown from \$54 million in 2016 to \$83.2 million in 2025. That is a 53% increase and represents millions of dollars

that could have been re-invested in actual community needs at the root of reactive policing → addressing the housing crisis, poverty, addiction support + frontline social + health issues.

It is abhorrent that funding for community and social services are being cut, while violent, ever militarized police are "invested" into. I strongly reject the current proposed budget, more money to police only results in police causing more violence and harm.

As someone who works for an Indigenous-led organization aiming to address Nations' upholding their treaty rights. In court, my work is tied to climate justice, Indigenous justice, cultural revitalization, reconciliation & social equity. These are some of the areas I'd rather see this money invested into.

I was disgusted to learn that the average Vic PD officer made \$156,293 in 2024, enough money to house 6 people for a year.

The city of Victoria has an opportunity to address the root cause of some of our city's challenges by re-investing in affordable housing, Parks, Libraries, Fire Departments, Non-profit grants, Arts & Culture.

I would like to see how the Council will respond to greater calls to re-direct funding to vital programs that actually keep the people who live here safe. I would like to receive a response on how you will be addressing these concerns.

Thank you,

Dear Council



No more police. I
want more libraries and
parks.

My mom says police
steal tents. That's
mean.



From

To whom it may concern, re: Victoria
Budget Impact.

As a working artist and longtime resident of Victoria, I am very disappointed and upset by the city's decision to cut arts funding by 18% in the next year's budget, while continuing to increase funding to Victoria police. I have seen the desperate situation on the street along Pandora - which should be the city's artistic hub with the nearby venues of the conservatory, Metro, and Intrepid theatres - only continue to become more desperate for our unhoused neighbours. Increases in bylaw sweeps and police budgets have done NOTHING but make things worse, contributing to increasing deaths on the block. There IS an abundance of research from many cities which shows that HOUSING PEOPLE IS the ONLY effective long-term solution for homelessness. Victoria is a hard enough city to afford to live in - even with a university degree, the lack of support for artists, available and affordable venues, and competitive granting opportunities have meant I have struggled to be stably housed.

I have personally witnessed bylaw throw away people's personal belongings and shelters under the justification of tents being "soiled" because they are wet (which they are MEANT TO BE in order to keep their inhabitants dry) even during atmospheric river events, creating significant risks for hypothermia. I have also personally witnessed excessive use of force by VIC PD in multiple situations.

Despite constant and egregious budget increases for VIC PD, the crime rate in Victoria has not decreased ~~since~~ in the past five years. It is clear that throwing money at policing is NOT working. It is time to reimagine public safety by investing in truly supportive and affordable housing, social services, and arts and culture. The police are overtasked and not equipped ~~to address the challenges~~ or qualified to address the issues they are being asked to. ~~and~~ Every resident of Victoria suffers from police budget increases at the cost of arts, education, transportation, and recreational budgets, and our most vulnerable suffer the most. Increasing police budgets is not a sustainable, effective, or compassionate solution, and I hope you will reconsider the city budget to reflect this.

Esquimalt.

For further discussion, my email is

To Whom it May Concern re 2026-2030 budget increase:

I am a Victoria resident living in Fernwood. I am strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

We're in a time of polycrisis and the areas that the city is proposing cutting funding to are critical to mitigate impacts and move us towards a future where there is actual community safety. Research and personal experience show that the most effective way to do so is through affordable housing programs, however as it stands, community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning is under threat. Victoria has surpassed Vancouver in regards to being unaffordable; this will only deepen with the proposed budget. Alongside gutting other integral community wellness pillars like arts, culture, neighbourhoods, grants, equity, diversity and inclusion, the social fabric that supports residents of Victoria's mental health will be diminished. This is why the unhoused community — our valued neighbours — are becoming further entrenched and the rate overall is increasing.

Additionally, the people who are most vulnerable to becoming unhoused are also the most vulnerable to policing — experiencing marginalization and violence at multiple sites. Black and Indigenous people are

disproportionately vulnerable due to systemic factors including racism and socio-economic marginalization. ~~Research~~ Research does not show that police decrease violence and crime, conclusively. Research does show that police increase violence. In Victoria, the crime rate has not decreased in the last 5 years in spite of increases to police budget. This will not solve the social issues in our community.

Instead of increasing the police budget, I would advocate for it to be decreased so funds can be returned to socially-based programs and resources that have been removed over decades of austerity-based economics and social policy. There are better, more effective alternatives for addressing social harm and crises. The police should be detasked and retasked to more appropriate community service providers in the following areas: responding to people in mental health crisis, addressing issues of poverty and unhoused neighbours, the removal of police from schools, the policing of illegal drug use, and traffic enforcement. These are some of the central ones, but not limited to them.

This is about transitioning not only funding, but power, equipment and force away from forces of state violence and committing to invest, instead, in community-centered forms of safety, as well as other vital social programs and infrastructure so everyone can thrive in Victoria. I appreciate your time reading this letter and would be willing to have deeper conversation. Sincerely,

DEAR COUNCIL,
I AM NOT ABOUT TO PAY
MORE PROPERTY TAX FOR
A BUNCH OF BEAT COPS.
YOU'D BETTER FIND
SOMETHING \$ MORE USEFUL
TO DO WITH MY TAX DOLLARS.
I WILL BE VOTING IN THE
NOV. 2026 MUNICIPAL
ELECTION SO GET IT
SORTED NOW.

(SHELBOURNE)

Hello my name is [redacted] and I am a Victoria resident on Mortimer St. I am OPPOSED to a 14% increase to the VPD budget, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city using my taxes to meet the ballooning demands of VICPD. I want my taxes to go towards housing and social programs, non-profit grants and libraries. Cops do not keep me safe, my community does. I refuse to let my money pay for corrupt officers to terrorize the unhoused.

VICPD has had 3,338 reports of overuse of force in 3 years (2018-2021), that's roughly 2 per day. Attacking people in crisis is NOT support, and it is NOT protection.

While VICPD's budget grows, necessary community services continue to get cut.

- ↳ Arts & culture events (-18%)
- ↳ Climate action (-10%)
- ↳ The EDI office (-34%)
- ↳ Community grants (-8.3%)

THESE SERVICES KEEP
US SAFE AND BENEFIT
THE COMMUNITY

Increasing property tax causes rent increases and ultimately creates more unhoused individuals. This money should be spent providing community housing and funding shelters. The 80% increase in bylaw officer budget will not prevent the consistent increase in Victoria's unhoused population. I am appalled by the continued harassment of people sheltering on the streets. We need to invest in the solutions to the root causes of homelessness, such as giving people a warm place to stay or safe clean drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and so am I. But I am more afraid of VICPD than I am of people in crisis. As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

In solidarity, with urgency

Dear Mayor + Council

Re: My Input on City of Victoria ~~2026~~ Budget 2026-2030

I am writing to say that I am disappointed in the 2026/2030 proposed budget for the City of Victoria. You are asking for community feedback and I want to say I do not approve of the 14% increase to Vic PD operating spending budget.

I do not want my taxes to go to police. I want it to go to other things:

ie. 1) Affordable housing - vic PD uses money to "sweep the streets" and deal with ~~the~~ folks in unhouesd areas.

I think these do more ^{bad} than good - they do harm making it harder for folks ~~to~~ on the street to get off street? ~~is that~~ ~~not what we~~ ~~all want.~~

In stead, provide ~~the~~ affordable ^{housing} to folks would allow ~~them~~ ^{by taking their possessions.} to get off the street because this is such an expensive city. In fact, the average vic cop ~~to~~ salary in ~~the~~ 2024 was \$156,293. a 4-bed apartment was 2040. that means with 1 ~~to~~ police officer's salary, we could house 6 people. I would prefer this and think this would be better solution to housing crisis.

2) Climate Action - climate crisis is happening - I am not sure we are prepared to deal with it and are doing enough to mitigate it. If we continue on this track we are due for more atmospheric fines + wild fires. Let's use our money to fund free transit + bike lanes to reduce our emissions and ensure

There is a Victoria we can actually live in, in the future.

3) small grants / Arts, Culture, events: these are the things that make me love Victoria and stay here. I can't believe you would cut these amazing things that keeps the vibrance + soul of Victoria alive - ~~just to terrorise~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~ just to fund the police. If this continues and more Arts, events + ~~business~~ close I am not sure why I would stay in this expensive, police ridden city.

To conclude - please do not increase the Victoria police budget.

As a resident of Victoria I am watching what Council does... until the upcoming election.

with kindness - sincerely,

(Resident of Victoria)
Fairfield

DEAR COUNCIL,
PLEASE DENY VICPD
14% INCREASE. YOU
ALREADY FUNDED
THEM WAY OVER -
BOARD - 52% INCREASE
IN 5 YEARS! TONE IT
DOWN, LET'S GO IN
A DIFFERENT DIRECTION.
SAY NO TO VICPD!

HILLSIDE

Dear Victoria Council,

My name is [redacted] and I have called these beautiful lands home for the past 9 years. I am compelled to write today to share my concerns and opposition to the 2026 Draft Budget. I am particularly opposed to the shocking 14% (over \$9 million) budget increase request made by VicPD. As guardians of our tax dollars, I urge you to deny this increase request.

As an arts worker specializing in youth arts programs, I am concerned about safety downtown. As the Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa notes, "Lack of affordable housing is a key factor in crime." By helping fund affordable housing initiatives, over yet another VicPD budget increase, we can begin to address the unmet needs that lead to crime. Multiple studies show that an increase in officers leads to an increase in officer-perpetrated violence incidents that make our city less safe. As I lead groups of students past officers coldly confiscating someone's only belongings just because they are unhoused, I wonder how these hurtful and harmful actions can be defensible by our local government.

Furthermore, as a theatre artist, I am deeply concerned that Victoria is becoming financially unaffordable for artists. Cutting arts and culture funding by 18% will destroy Victoria's reputation as a haven city for the arts. Prioritizing the police budget over our arts community hurts arts workers like myself and the youth we serve. Council has the power to fund positive community investments like housing, arts, and culture, over yet another officer. Please reject VicPD's request.

Shelburne
Neighborhood

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Dear Municipal Council,

I have lived in Victoria, BC for five years. It has been an amazing time, I love the arts and culture, the nature and most of all, the community. As a resident, working with a non-profit and artists, I am concerned and deeply worried about the increase in the Victoria Police Department.

The average VicPD officer made \$156,293 :- 2024
The average monthly rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in Victoria in August 2025 was \$2,040.
Every officer VicPD hires is six people who could have been housed for a year. VicPD had at least 251 officers on payroll in 2024. This is concerning to read, I have lived in the city watching rising rents and beloved music and arts spaces close down, like the VEC. The money could be allocated towards funding social services, health and housing programs, offering alternatives to policing communities. The problem starts and ends with the self-fulfilling prophecy that crime or unwanted social behaviours require force to be kept in check. People need to be supported with kindness and care. Modern policing tactics harm our communities. I do not want to see my neighbours brutalized, I do not want more policing in my community or more harm. Let us work together for a kinder, caring future for our community.

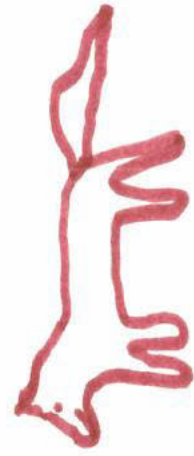
Sincerely,

, Fernwood Resident

Dear Council,

I don't think there should be more money going to the police.

There are other ways to keep people safe! My mum says that we need more mental health people helping! Police scare people!!



From:

Worth Park

Dear Mayor & Council,

Thanks for your dedicated work this term. I'm writing to express my opposition to the Vic PD's request for a 14% budgetary increase.

As a resident of North Park, I can see how their work and strategy has been ineffective & potentially counterproductive in addressing public safety.

Everyone in our city suffers from the Vic PD's current ballooned budget. Extensive evidence shows how police are unequipped to address the housing, substance, & mental health crises.

We need reinvestment. We need rethinking. We need to reimagine public safety. Housing is the most pressing issue for our city that needs additional funding, free public transit, supported arts venues, & additional funding for Solid would be a responsible approach to ~~at~~ make our communities more healthy.

I look forward to supporting those who represent the poor, creative, & the healing.

In solidarity with those of you who are ready to do what is kind & wise.

North Park Resident

From:
To: [Legislative Services email](#)
Subject: Resident opposed to 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department
Date: January 23, 2026 10:26:27 AM

Hello, my name is

I am a Victoria resident and homeowner, residing on Fairfield Road. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go toward social programs, arts and culture, and a city that cares for it's residents, not towards hiring more police officers, because I know that community is what keeps us safe, not cops.

I do not agree that more police is the solution to safety in Victoria. I witness excessive police responding to routine calls every day in this city. I witness sweeps that cost street-involved people their safety and security - their shelters, blankets, precious things etc. I see a lack of social supports, disability supports, and care.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Victoria Resident

From: [Jeff Bray](#)
To: [Legislative Services email](#); [Chris Coleman \(Councillor\)](#); [Dave Thompson \(Councillor\)](#); [Jeremy Caradonna \(Councillor\)](#); [Krista Loughton \(Councillor\)](#); [Marg Gardiner \(Councillor\)](#); [Marianne Alto \(Mayor\)](#); [Matt Dell \(Councillor\)](#); [Stephen Hammond \(Councillor\)](#); [Susan Kim \(Councillor\)](#)
Cc: [Connor Tanton](#); [Madison Sutcliffe](#)
Subject: DVBA Member Feedback on 2026 Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 2:36:42 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[Cov Draft Budget Business Feedback Package.pdf](#)

Hi, please find attached feedback we received from 62 member businesses (who are all listed in the attachment) on the City Budget. As a way of increasing participation in this important engagement opportunity, the DVBA invited members to either provide feedback directly to the City or by completion of a consolidated survey structured on the City Budget.

The attachment provides a summary of the feedback as well as the individual responses to each issue.

Jeff Bray, LPM
Chief Executive Officer
Downtown Victoria Business Association
jeff@downtownvictoria.ca
D 250-386-2239
C 250-217-9461



A PROUD MEMBER OF



January 23, 2026

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC, V9W 1P6

Re: City of Victoria 2026-2030 Budget Plan

Dear Mayor Alto and Council Members,

We are writing to encourage the City of Victoria to increase funding for community-led food security initiatives and projects in the 2026-2030 budget.

Organizations such as the LifeCycles Project Society, community gardens, and other food system nonprofits play a critical role in addressing food insecurity. Despite smaller budgets, these programs deliver outsized community impact, providing food access, education and environmental benefits at a fraction of the cost of internally delivered programs.

Here in Victoria, the LifeCycles Project manages and maintains a number of programs and community gardens with limited funding, mainly from grants and donations. Of particular interest, we have Fruit Harvesting and Farm Gleaning programs that harvest fruits and vegetables that would otherwise go to waste, and redirect them to property owners, volunteers, community groups, and other users. Last year, these programs harvested and utilized nearly 65,000 pounds of food – the equivalent of 40,000 meals.

Members of the food security community have noted that external grant-funded programs frequently deliver greater community benefit per dollar spent than internally administered initiatives. Providing additional stable funding streams for these organizations would allow them to continue expanding their beneficial impact in our community.

There is the opportunity and desire, as well as a growing need, to expand these programs. Stable funding from the City of Victoria would support food security programs at a time when more people are struggling. Growing food in community gardens, providing education to grow food at home, and having food harvested that is otherwise at risk of going to waste, are means of directly addressing food insecurity issues in our community.

Additional benefits to community-based food initiatives include supporting public health, climate resilience, and social connection through hands-on volunteer engagement. Increased stable funding for community gardens, food recovery programs, seed libraries and educational programs would be a cost-effective way to strengthen Victoria's food systems and directly address food insecurity now and for the future.

We therefore urge you to recognize the value of these community-driven efforts and to allocate greater funding toward external food-security programs in the upcoming budget cycle.

The LifeCycles Project Society would welcome the opportunity to meet with Victoria Council to discuss how our programs can provide direct and cost-effective benefits to our community.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors,
The LifeCycles Project

<https://lifecyclesproject.ca/>

Draft Letter to Victoria City Council

January 23rd, 2026

Dear Mayor Alto and members of City Council,

We are writing on behalf of Neighbourhood Houses (NHs) of Victoria to express concern about the proposed 2026 municipal budget. At a time when essential community grants and social infrastructure funding are proposed to be significantly cut, the Victoria Police Department (VicPD) is requesting a 14% increase (\$10.85M) bringing their total budget to \$91M – about one quarter of the entire City budget. This increase would come at the direct expense of the prevention- and wellbeing-focused services our residents rely on daily.

NHs contribute directly to community safety and wellbeing every day, yet we are consistently being asked to do more with less. With a collective City budget of just \$1,706,500 between all City-funded community and seniors centres, the proposed cuts will immediately and disproportionately impact the people who depend on our programs. As you navigate difficult budget decisions, we urge you to recognize that the work happening at NHs *is* community safety and wellbeing, and that investing in NHs is a cost-effective, evidence-based alternative to further increased police spending.

Neighbourhood Houses directly fulfill the City's Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan

The City's own *Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan* identifies six pillars of action. NHs advance each one of them every day through prevention, connection, and community-centered support.

- **Pillar 1: Support a range of civilian, bylaw, and policing crisis response and prevention services**

Neighbourhood Houses are prevention services. Across Victoria, we provide:

- Food security programs including free community meals and food hampers
- Housing navigation and housing loss prevention services
- Service referrals connecting residents to health, mental health, income, and other supports
- Crisis supports including counselling and emergency funding resources.
- Free and low-cost youth, family, seniors, and recreation programs
- Newcomer settlement supports
- Clothing hampers and free stores
- Harm reduction resources
- Accessible and inclusive community programs and events
- Accessible cooling facilities during heatwaves

Most importantly, NHs bring these supports together in one trusted neighbourhood hub, reducing barriers and preventing crises before they escalate.

- **Pillar 2: Beautify, support, and enhance Victoria’s urban villages**

NHs steward community gardens, facilitate neighbourhood beautification projects through the My Great Neighbourhood Grant, support mural and public art installations, and animate public spaces through free and accessible community events.

- **Pillar 3: Advance accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion through a social justice lens**

NHs champion the City’s EDI and accessibility goals through EDI committees, community partnerships, and programs that prioritize equity-serving communities.

- **Pillar 4: Support wellbeing solutions for housed and unhoused neighbours**

NHs operate free community dinners, food hampers, clothing programs, counselling services, community programs and events. Both housed and unhoused neighbours rely on our meals, free stores, and referrals. NHs offer the trusted points of connection where relationships, dignity, and community understanding can grow between neighbours.

- **Pillar 5: Work with partners to create life opportunities for unhoused people**

Examples include: Quadra Village Community Centres’ Housing Resource Program for single adults, Fernwood NH’s creation of 10 affordable three-bedroom units, Oakland Community Associations rental partnerships with mutual-aid groups fundraising to support campers at Oaklands park, and free legal and tax clinics at Burnside Gorge Community Association.

- **Pillar 6: Develop and implement a community safety plan**

Neighbourhood Houses *are* a community-based community safety plan in action. Investing in NHs strengthens the very approach the City has committed to.

Alignment with the City’s Resident Wellbeing Priorities

The top survey responses for “Which initiatives do you believe would be most helpful to your overall wellbeing?”(p. 26) are areas where NHs are already leaders:

- **Affordable housing:** Fernwood’s affordable units; Quadra Village’s housing resource program.
- **Mental health and addiction support:** Free and low-cost counselling, referrals and supportive programming.
- **Environmental and green space stewardship:** Community gardens, communal plots, fruit tree plantings, and free garden workshops.
- **Free community events and arts/culture:** FernFest, Quadra Village Days, Burnside Gorge Community Garage Sales, Oaklands Sunset Farmers’ Market, community dinners, other seasonal events.

- **Safer/inclusive urban design:** Traffic-calming projects through MGNG (e.g., the community-led Oaklands Woonerf project).
- **Recreation and learning opportunities:** Free and accessible youth, family, senior, and newcomer programs, plus free and low-cost workshops.

While each NH offers slightly different services and programs, we function as a connected network, providing residents with a trusted, local point of access to the programs and supports that most improve their wellbeing.

2. Neighbourhood Houses are being asked to do more with less while VicPD requests a \$10.85M increase

While we appreciate that the 20% reduction in community grants has been changed in the most recently updated 2026 financial draft, we remain deeply concerned about reductions to community grants that support our programming and neighbourhood-scale initiatives foundational to prevention and wellbeing:

- **\$52,000 cut to the My Great Neighbourhood Grant program** – one of the most effective tools for resident-driven safety, arts, culture, placemaking, and traffic-calming projects.
- **\$100,350 cut to the Major Community Initiatives & Events Grants program** – shifting support away from community-based events toward large corporate events.
- **Growing in the City Grants:** While proposed reductions were not approved and funding remains intact at \$225,000, ongoing uncertainty around this program creates planning challenges for NHs stewarding community gardens and food security initiatives.

Meanwhile, VicPD – **already the highest per-capita-funded police department in BC** – is requesting a 14% increase. At a time when NHs and other community and seniors’ centres face rising operating costs, staffing pressures, and increased community need, this request feels fundamentally disconnected from the fiscal realities we and the communities we serve are navigating.

If VicPD is unable to provide adequate services on an already unprecedented budget, Council should be seriously concerned about the department’s fiscal management.

We are asking City Council to help us understand how police increases can be justified in the name of “community safety and wellbeing” when base funding for community and senior centres has not kept pace with inflation or growing community need, and reductions to community grants continue to strain the key services that enable us to deliver safety and wellbeing daily – including poverty-reduction supports that police cannot provide.

We recognize that the 2026 budget will not be finalized until spring 2026 and that further changes remain possible. We urge Council to protect and strengthen investments in community-based prevention as the budget process continues.

3. Neighbourhood Houses are an alternative that VicPD claims does not exist

During the November 20 budget meeting, Chief Fiona Wilson stated she is “interested in conversations about where police do not need to be” but also asserted “there is no alternative to the police at this time.”

Neighbourhood Houses are demonstrating these alternatives daily as a major part of the community safety ecosystem, alongside other community organizations. We operate as community hubs to respond to and prevent crises, support vulnerable neighbours, foster belonging, and strengthen the social conditions that reduce harm, loneliness, isolation, and poverty. This is the foundation of community safety.

We want to be clear that we are not calling for cuts to the VicPD budget. We are asking Council to refrain from approving increases that would come at the direct expense of community services we offer that align with the City’s own Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan.

As organizations experienced delivering essential services with budget constraints, we are concerned that several proposed VicPD expenditures lack a clear connection to improved community safety and well-being. Below we have shared these expenditures along with a comparison of what these funds could achieve if invested in NHs to deliver measurable, prevention-focused outcomes:

- **Reintroduced Financial Analyst position (\$100,000+):** Previously rejected by Esquimalt and the Province for lack of demonstrated need (2023).
 - The same funding could provide **40,000 children’s snacks** across NH programs
- **Victoria & Esquimalt Police Board expenses (\$100,000 strategic planning + \$64,735 board costs):** No clear justification provided.
 - Equivalent funds could support **several months of free weekly community dinners** across NHs.
- **Public Affairs staffing (\$97,263):** Unclear scope or demonstrated need.
 - Could fund **more than 3,000 Good Food Boxes** to food insecure families
- **Logistics Coordinator (\$133,299):** Previously deemed unnecessary by the Province.
 - Equivalent funds could provide **free counselling services to more than 300 residents**.
- **Internally developed AI system (cost unknown):** No public information on purpose, efficacy, privacy implications, or ongoing costs.
- **Potential facial recognition technology (cost unknown):** High privacy risk and not aligned with community wellbeing.
- **Hiring 25 new officers** under the “optional” 4% increase (**\$3.1 million**):
 - Even \$1 million of this increase could expand NHs expand safety-enhancing services citywide, including **food security initiatives, youth programming, community dinners, and housing stabilization supports**.

The VicPD proposed expenditures do not align with evidence-based prevention, harm reduction, or community wellbeing.

For comparatively modest investments, Victoria's Neighbourhood Houses deliver outsized, measurable returns in community wellbeing and prevention. If even \$1M of the \$10.85M proposed increase were invested across NHs in the city, the impact on safety, prevention, and community wellbeing would be profound. As organizations who know how to do more with less, we cannot see a justification for VicPD's budget increase request while core community services are cut and underfunded.

The path forward

We welcome the opportunity to meet with City Council to discuss:

- where community-based safety investments could have the greatest impact,
- how NHs can support the City's Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan, and
- how targeted investments in NHs could reduce preventable strain on emergency systems.

Neighbourhood Houses are ready to work alongside Council to build a safer, healthier, and more connected Victoria. We urge Council to reject, at minimum, the optional 4% VicPD increase request and to reinvest in community grants and supports that truly advance community safety and wellbeing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sandy Robertson, Executive Director / Board of Directors, Oaklands

Chantille Viaud, Executive Director / Board of Directors, Fernwood

Kelly Greenwood, Executive Director / Board of Directors, Quadra Village

From:
Subject: 2026-FY Budgett concerns
Date: January 13, 2026 at 2:48 PM
To: Legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi Victoria Council,

I have concerns about this year's budget and specifically the large increase in the proposed property tax.

Increasing taxes by over 10% while inflation is only 2.2% seems to be a miss step by this council. I understand that it takes money to repair and improve our city but as it currently stands I have not seen improvements to our city over the past 4 years, if anything I feel like things have gotten worse. Adding more bike lanes while we still have a massive drug and unhorsed problem seems like a misappropriation of resources.

The city should take a closer look at its internal operations and overall spending to identify inefficiencies, redundancies, or areas where costs could be reduced. These savings could then be redirected toward higher-priority projects and community needs.

Cheers,

From:

Subject: 2026-2030 draft budget

Date: December 16, 2025 at 11:40 AM

To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

My priorities for municipal government have always been to stick to the knitting. Street repairs, sewage, recreation, centers, and policing fall under this category for me. Vanity projects are less important and should not be prioritized over the potholes surrounding my neighborhood. I don't know how many fellow voters feel the same way I do, but it feels like we've gotten away from maintaining the core values of this level of government in order to create new projects like bike lanes, and repairs to Centennial Square, which could wait until there's money available in the budget. Giving 5% to the police to increase policing is something I can also get behind. I know I'm just one voice, but I hope it can be heard.

From: Nicole Sorochan nicole@onenetinc.com
Subject: 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan feedback
Date: January 18, 2026 at 6:47 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

January 19, 2026

To: City of Victoria Council, via Legislative Services
Re: Feedback on the 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan

The question facing this Council is simple: How do we engage the up-and-comers who are shaping our world to keep building businesses, art, and culture that make Victoria vibrant? Or do we continue down a path toward more expensive condos owned by people who do not live here, more chain stores, and streets that empty out by early evening?

Downtown should be for culture and gathering. It should be a place where local entrepreneurs take risks, where artists create, where neighbours run into each other, where there is a reason to stay past 5pm. That vision continues to slip away.

I voted for this Council. I voted for candidates who promised affordability, who promised a more liveable and vibrant city, who promised to tackle rising costs, who promised to invest in arts and culture and strengthen communities. I believed in that vision.

But from where I sit, as a small business owner trying to keep my doors open downtown, this Council's presence has felt almost non-existent. The promises of affordability ring hollow when we are looking at a 10.44% property tax increase. The promises of vibrancy ring hollow when our theatres are up for sale and our streets empty out at dusk. I am asking you to show up. I am asking you to live up to what you said you stood for.

I am writing as a small business owner operating a marketing agency in downtown Victoria. In 2024, we purchased a commercial building downtown, a significant investment in the city's core because we believed in its future. Instead, we have encountered mounting costs and declining accessibility, and inflated property values, that threaten the viability of operating here.

The Reality of Rising Costs

Small businesses are already under tremendous strain. Material costs are up. Food costs are up. Operating costs continue to climb. These pressures affect both businesses trying to keep their doors open and customers deciding where to spend their money. When everything costs more, a 10.44% property tax increase is not just a line item. It is the difference between a business surviving or closing. They in turn have to raise prices, which adds strain to customers too, who then choose to buy online, or elsewhere.

For context, Vancouver City Council approved a 0% property tax increase for 2026 while still prioritizing frontline services including public safety, road maintenance, and arts and community grants. The contrast is stark: Victoria is proposing 10.44% while our neighbouring major city achieved 0%. The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association called Vancouver's approach "welcome relief for downtown businesses facing immense cost pressures." Victoria's small businesses deserve similar consideration.

When the Crystal Pool referendum passed earlier this year, the city's approach was to seek funding from senior levels of government rather than loading costs entirely onto property taxpayers. The city pursued federal infrastructure funding and the Mayor expressed optimism about provincial contributions for a capital city project, yet that is not reflected. Do not simply pass the full burden onto residents and businesses. I also remain so confused, as we have some of the highest property values in the Country, we barely need to deal with infrastructure costs burdening other cities like constant snow removal and heavy road construction (due to the more severe climate), yet we still face such budgetary concerns? The budget needs to be scrutinized and prioritized.

Accessibility and Parking

Downtown Victoria is becoming increasingly difficult to reach and increasingly expensive once you arrive. Parking rates of \$6 per hour, with paid enforcement extended to 8am to 8pm seven days a week, create a significant barrier for both customers and employees. I have to pay \$7 for my latte (to help the business cover their hard costs) and \$6 in parking... My staff commute from Langford and surrounding areas; parking shortages for commuters at steep rates add substantially to our operating costs and their personal burden. Meanwhile, competing commercial areas like Langford offer better infrastructure and easier access. If the City wants a vibrant downtown, it needs to make it easier, not harder, for people to get here and spend time here. The trade-off of expensive parking in exchange for free bus passes does not work for most customers and employees who need to drive.

Traffic Flow and Infrastructure

Traffic circulation through downtown has deteriorated significantly. The closure of Vancouver Street to through traffic has made navigating the core extremely difficult, particularly for those of us who live nearby. As a James Bay resident who works downtown, I regularly face situations where two of three routes to work are blocked by construction, don't have proper advanced traffic lights etc. And when events occur at Dallas Road, Ship Point, or the Legislature, it can take hours to travel a short distance. This is where balance comes in.

I support bike infrastructure, but two-way bike lanes on one-way streets create confusion and safety concerns. Proper planning should accommodate all modes of

concern and safety concerns. Proper planning should accommodate all modes of transportation, not sacrifice vehicle accessibility entirely. People take different modes of transportation for different reasons. More bike lanes must come with proper planning for cars so the city remains accessible to everyone, and that proper route planning and traffic flow is tested to remain reasonable for all.

Misaligned Priorities

Some recent investments feel disconnected from downtown's actual needs. Herbal gardens and tree plantings along major arteries like Douglas Street, while well-intentioned, do not address the fundamental challenges facing downtown businesses. On high-traffic corridors, proper traffic flow should take priority over aesthetic additions.

The \$750,000 allocated for OUR DWTN revitalization is welcome, but beautification efforts mean little if customers cannot afford to park and employees cannot afford to commute. We are in an economic crisis. Buildings are for lease everywhere. We should be encouraging a vibrant downtown and inviting people to the area, not making it harder to get by.

Arts, Culture, and the Heart of Victoria

Downtown is losing its cultural anchors. Both the Odeon and Cineplex theatres are up for sale. We have lost our event centre. The Metro is too expensive to operate. Arts organizations and entertainment venues are being pushed out by high rents, unfavorable zoning, and rising property values. Artists can only afford to work in areas zoned for demolition.

These are not luxuries. They are what makes Victoria worth visiting and worth living in. If we lose the last threads of our arts and culture community, we lose the soul and heart of this city. We lose what makes us different from anywhere else. I speak from experience. Over the past five years, I have participated in working groups trying to bring music, arts, and tech spaces to this city. I have seen investor-backed proposals with real community support hit wall after wall. Zoning, seismic upgrades, literally block progress. People with money, with plans, with energy give up because the city makes it feel impossible. The few that do make it, are often in spaces that are discounted only because they are going to be torn down in a few years. Research supports investing in arts and culture as a community safety strategy. Studies from the Urban Institute found that arts engagement increases community tolerance, empathy, and civic engagement, qualities that reduce crime and strengthen neighborhoods. A 2025 UK government study on arts and culture programmes found that such programs benefit communities and contribute to a sense of safety. The UK College of Policing has documented that engagement through arts and culture increases mutual trust and understanding between police and communities.

I urge Council to prioritize meaningful investment in arts, culture, and entertainment,

and to bring local artists and arts groups into the planning process (There are several of you on the council, no?!). When we invest in culture with community input, we create vibrancy that radiates outward. We give people a reason to come downtown, to stay downtown, and to care about downtown. Zoning reform, rent stabilization for cultural spaces, and genuine partnership with the arts community should be priorities, not afterthoughts.

Homelessness and the Drug Crisis

As a business operating in the heart of downtown, I see homelessness and drug use daily. With proper monitoring and a humanitarian approach, homelessness itself is manageable. The real crisis is what fentanyl and related drugs are doing to people on our streets.

The proposed budget includes a 5.02% increase for the Victoria Police Department. But more policing is not the answer to a health crisis. People suffering from addiction need rehabilitation and treatment, not simply to be moved from one block to another. While police should get an increase in funding, I would urge Council to consider whether funds directed toward police increases might be also be better invested in rehabilitation programs and support services that address the root causes of what we are seeing on our streets.

A Request for Balance

I am not asking for the City to stop investing in infrastructure or services. I am asking for balance and pragmatism. We are in an economic crisis. Commercial buildings sit empty across downtown. Small businesses are struggling to survive.

Before adding new programs or pursuing aesthetic improvements, I urge Council to focus on the fundamentals: make downtown accessible, keep property taxes manageable, seek funding from senior levels of government rather than loading costs onto local taxpayers, protect the businesses and cultural institutions that give this city its character, invest in rehabilitation for those suffering from addiction, and bring local communities into the planning process.

Victoria can be a city that nurtures the next generation of entrepreneurs, artists, and community builders. Or it can be a city of empty storefronts, absentee-owned condos, and chain stores. The budget decisions Council makes now will determine which future we get.

I voted for you because I believed in your vision. Now I am asking you to deliver on it.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.



Respectfully,

Nicole Sorochan



Nicole Sorochan
Principal & Creative Director
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From: Gabriel Gaultier gabriel@missinglinkanalytics.com
Subject: 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (updated 2026 Draft Budget)
Date: January 7, 2026 at 1:55 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the City's 2026–2030 Draft Financial Plan.

I want to be clear at the outset: **I am not opposed to tax increases** when they are justified, transparent, and tied to real service demands. Municipal services cost money, and residents understand that. My concern is **how responsibility is framed and how accountability is distributed**.

The decision to separate the City's proposed tax increase from the Victoria Police budget creates an artificial and divisive distinction. Public safety is not an external add-on to municipal governance - it is a core municipal responsibility. Treating policing as a separate burden risks obscuring the fact that **many public safety pressures are downstream effects of decisions made locally and provincially**, not solely police operations.

Historically, policing budgets have already been constrained relative to growing demands. Framing police funding as a distinct or exceptional increase, rather than as part of an integrated public safety strategy, risks further weakening an institution that is already operating under strain.

More broadly, costs rise when governance roles blur. When municipalities step outside their primary lane ie: Dowler - whether in service delivery, policy experimentation, or responsibilities better suited to other levels of government - accountability weakens and downstream costs increase, often landing in public safety, emergency response, and enforcement.

Municipal government works best when:

- Council sets policy direction and priorities,
- trained professionals execute within clear mandates,
- and accountability mechanisms ensure transparency and lawful process.

Strong leadership is not about doing more; it is about **creating clarity** so institutions can do their jobs effectively. When roles are clear and accountability is strong, residents can have confidence that tax increases are necessary, fair, and well-managed.

If public safety costs are rising, that reality should be discussed honestly and holistically - not segmented in a way that pits services against one another. Residents deserve a full picture of how decisions across all levels of government contribute to current pressures and costs.

Transparency, accountability, and role discipline are not abstract principles. They are essential to sustainable budgeting and public trust.

If it came down to deciding which tax increase to take - given what our community has gone through, I'll choose the Police.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

--

Gabriel Gaultier
Director
C +1 403 305 9761
gabriel@missinglinkanalytics.com



From:
Subject: 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 15, 2026 at 11:49 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

JANUARY 14, 2026

Attention Mayor and council of the city of Victoria BC:

You must all be out of your minds to think that a TEN PERCENT property tax increase is in any way reasonable or fair. The majority of property owners are SENIORS on FIXED INCOMES like myself and my disabled husband. We are NOT mortgage free and are struggling just to keep a roof over our heads and food in the fridge! How dare you propose such a ridiculous idea!! Are you trying to push seniors out of their homes and onto the streets? It appears that you are.

How about ALL of you take a PAY CUT and cut the ridiculous hardly used bike lanes, intensification construction projects and wasteful woke programs instead? You must think taxpayers are a bottomless pit of money that you can just reach down anytime and fill your guts with. Enough is enough! Cut your proposal down to 2% TOTAL increase and say goodnight!

Sincerely,

From poor old

Here's how to provide feedback on the updated 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (updated 2026 Draft Budget):

Submit written comments:
Email: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
(External link)

SENT!
Mail: Legislative Services, City of Victoria, 1 Centennial Square, Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

YOU COULDN'T PAY ME TO GO DOWNTOWN!! Horrible place!
Drop off: to the Ambassador in the City Hall foyer, weekdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or the drop box outside the Pandora Avenue entrance, 24 hours

From:
Subject: Adding my 2 cents
Date: January 18, 2026 at 9:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Victoria already has plenty of funding going to Police. In my opinion, it's not the way to make downtown "safer". Invest in harm reduction, shelters, mental health support and resources for the unhoused.
Thank you

From:
Subject: Against VicPD Budget Increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Foul Bay Rd. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

In my opinion, there are enough officers around already. I've seen the way police treat our houseless community and it frightens me, as many of us are close to that reality already with the housing crisis and general economy at hand right now. I think we need to redirect the funds into social workers as liaisons for houseless people in our community and as collaborators with police.

Thanks for reading,
[REDACTED]

From:
Subject: Budget - Victoria Police Dept
Date: January 19, 2026 at 7:55 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Stadacona Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere. Affordable housing unavailability has been and continues to contribute to the unaffordability of this city.

As a supporter of the arts, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months. Prioritizing the VicPD's requests over other community needs such as increasing safety through community programming, vibrant cityscapes and suitable housing is incredibly short-sighted and ill-advised.

Thank you for your time.

Stadacona Avenue, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Budget 2026 comment
Date: January 19, 2026 at 8:00 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good evening,

I have never written the municipality before. I have lived in Victoria for 25 years and I do vote municipally.

I wanted to make one comment after reviewing the budget overview for 2026.

In the section below, "community safety & well-being", you detail a \$77.99 million bill for the City's share of the police budget, and a total tax increase of 10.44%. While I recognize the important role that policing plays in community care or "safety", real safety emerges from HEALTHY communities. Invest more in the health of your community and city and you would not need to consider such an absurd hike in police funding.

Government is by nature of our system, short sighted. It takes strong leadership and direction to make big changes. I hope we can get to a place where do more at municipal level to address root/systemic problems, and see less reactionary funding.

Oaklands, Victoria

From:
Subject: Budget 2026 Victoria
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:49 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Greetings,

Thank you for your detailed work and for offering opportunity for input.

In today's economic climate, it is important to keep municipal taxes low. A budget with a 10+% tax increase is not acceptable; it's cumulative over the years and grows exponentially.

My wife and I are retired, and we are not in the billionaire or millionaire groups - in fact we sit much lower on the totem pole.

Please consider trimming the budget so we can afford to live in Victoria, with today's costs, including prices of goods and services, sales tax, income tax, property tax.....

A tax increase of 10+% must be a concern for employed, unemployed, and retired individuals.

Thank you,

(Victoria, BC)

From:
Subject: Budget 2026
Date: January 12, 2026 at 8:54 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

Just a note to express that I am very concerned about the pace of property tax increases in Victoria.

I encourage the city to find *significant* additional savings. I wasn't in support of the Crystal Pool project (because of the cost), but now that it has been approved, we would be irresponsible not to make cuts elsewhere to offset, even if painful.

I am also concerned that tax payers may be covering too much of the cost of the city preparing for population growth. I suspect these kind of costs may be hidden throughout the budget. Underground infrastructure perhaps. As a tax payer, I give priority to services that support existing residents, not those related to building out the city for those who don't live here yet.

From:
Subject: Budget and feedback
Date: January 18, 2026 at 10:28 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Members of City Council,

I am writing to formally express my deep concern regarding the proposed tax increase. As a resident and stakeholder in this community, I find the scale of this hike unsustainable. It signals a disconnect between City Hall and the financial realities facing your constituents. To earn and maintain public trust, the City must demonstrate fiscal discipline.

It is no longer acceptable to simply pass the burden of increased costs onto City taxpayers. There is an expectation that you analyze your processes, identify redundancies, and find efficiencies to protect the bottom line. I am calling on this Council to take a "business-first" approach to the municipal budget. This means conducting a rigorous internal audit of departmental spending and streamlining administrative processes before asking for further contributions from taxpayers.

Other municipal, provincial, and federal jurisdictions are currently making difficult decisions to prioritize essential services and trim non-essential expenditures. Our city must do the same. I urge you to take your roles as stewards of our public funds with the utmost seriousness by seeking out innovative ways to reduce overhead. Taking these steps is not just a matter of finance; it is a necessary action to restore the public's confidence in your ability to manage our city's future responsibly.

Sent from my iPhone

From:
Subject: Budget comments
Date: January 9, 2026 at 7:56 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

After reviewing as many of the budget documents as i could, I respectfully submit that I was unable to discern what, if any, cost saving measures the municipal government was undertaking to try and mitigate this very high increase in property taxes.

As a formerly provincial employee, I'm well aware of the fact that City of Victoria salaries were, and continue to be, significantly higher than those of the provincial employees. Public servants, should not be spared the pressure of inflation on their salaries beyond the rest of citizens. Accountability and transparency around salaries and staff costs is needed.

What I am getting at is that I would feel better about a tax increase of this size if I felt confident that municipal government had looked within its own house; salaries, overtime, efficient operations, perks, travel, conferences etc to ensure that savings are found everywhere, before raising taxes so significantly.

If there have been meaningful efforts to reduce the regular operational costs of the city, as described above, then why not share this? How have salaries increased (or not) over the last 10 years? A proportional view of salaries does not give a clear sense of how the city's budget is showing fiscal restraint within its own costs. Can you share a view of the budget breakdown over time?

A 10% tax increase puts further pressure on rents, as many homeowners are also impacted by inflation and increased costs for utilities and taxes, which renters avoid, and often are completely unaware of.

In a city like Victoria, many homeowners are also just barely making ends meet by using rentals, which also helps with the housing crisis, of course. The developers of high rises, are much less affected and probably also take a higher profit for rentals than most landlords with secondary suites.

I'm not suggesting that homeowners need extra sympathy, no doubt that wealth is created for us, through our ownership of property, but that it is not a zero sum game. We cannot put property tax pressure and expect rents to also decline, or for our city to remain vibrant and sustainable for everyone.

Thanks for listening and I hope that further information as recommended in this note above can be provided as part of the consultative process.

Thank you

From:
Subject: Budget deliberation
Date: January 12, 2026 at 3:52 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

From:
Subject: Budget feedback
Date: January 6, 2026 at 6:29 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

~10% tax increase is unacceptable. As simple as that. We're in the economically uncertain times, and people in many companies are asked to do more with less. In 2025, both my wife and I lost our jobs. We tightened our belts and eventually found new jobs. This is also a story for many of my former colleagues, and some of them are still looking. Seeing 10% increase proposals is a slap in a face.

I am asking my city to do what most of us are already are doing - eliminate inefficiencies, and do more with less.

From:
Subject: Budget Feedback
Date: December 12, 2025 at 6:41 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

A councilman suggested during your draft city budget deliberations that if there were any citizens who had ideas about the budget to submit them.

So, this email serves 2 purposes:

1. Feedback on current budget.
2. Suggestion for revenue generation.

1. A tax hike of 10% + is unreasonable and unsustainable and one needs to ask the question 'what is going to change next year or the year after?' Wages continue to rise for city employees and the number employed is large, so where does all this end? No cuts to the labour force? Just continue to tax the citizens?

2. Revenue generation idea: Please consider taxing (or increasing the current tax if you have one) the cruise ship visitors to our city. According to your statistics 1 million plus people arrived by cruise ship this year. An additional \$10 per person is 10 million dollars into city coffers. Almost EVERY single cruise port has increased their fee on visiting tourists, so please consider this option.

It makes sense... they arrive, they spend time in our city and they pay a small fee to experience Victoria. It is a no brainer. Tourists will still come with a nominal fee attached. You name the city and they have ALL done the same - Venice, Amsterdam, Barcelona etc.

The solution is sitting right under our noses.

Budget issue solved.

Thank you

From:
Subject: budget increase for the VicPD
Date: January 23, 2026 at 8:56 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Hillside ave.

I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge the Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs, such as the Victoria Cool Aid Society, who actually help individuals without the threat of violence and incarceration.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria resident.

From:

Subject: Budget increase for VicPD

Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:50 AM

To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Richardson street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I am also a support worker who works in recovery, harm reduction, mental health, and I work with the unhoused or "street" population. I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

Thank you for your time,

City of Victoria resident

From:
Subject: Budget Inout 2026
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:19 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

The vic police budget is already much higher than it needs to be!!!

Does this increase to their budget cover things like their TWENTY TWO THOUSAND DOLLAR party at government house? Exorbitant wages?

Ridiculous that victoria is paying bylaw to confiscate people's belongings (including their naloxone and personal documents) instead of offering 8-8 storage (maybe a good use of the copious vacant spaces downtown).

Spend the money where it will matter - to support the community, not police it.

We have almost no public bathrooms. No public showers or coin op showers. Garbage cans/recycle bins are needed in many areas. When I am out and about downtown the nearest "public" bathroom can be as much as a 30 minute walk away if it is even open at all. Outside of downtown is even more difficult.

Better uses for the money than Vic PD and bylaw:

- public bathrooms and showers
- improving services for the unhoused
- mental health professionals as liaisons instead of sending police for mental health issues
- affordable housing that is ACTUALLY affordable and not dictated by capitalist landlords/developers
- filling empty storefronts downtown (businesses cannot afford rent either) with LOCAL businesses
- safe consumption sites
- services/housing for unhoused youth especially indigenous youth

From:
Subject: Budget input.
Date: January 12, 2026 at 3:05 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I am writing with some ideas regarding the draft budget being prepared now.

Victoria has a decent environmental plan. However, with the current plan, GHG targets and net zero targets will continue to be missed. It is a well proven fact that animal agriculture is the second leading cause of GHG emissions overall and a leading cause of methane (a very damaging GHG in it's warming potential). See the study out of Oxford University by scientists, Poore and Nemecek here [Manuscript](#) A way that the City of Victoria can mitigate these consumption based emissions is to encourage more plant-based consumption and plant based food services. Giving restaurants that offer at least 25% plant based food a tax break and as the availability in that establishment increases the availability of plant based food, the tax break increases. Also, setting an example by only purchasing plant based food for city events, city hall meals, etc. and insisting that vendors at city owned facilities provide primarily plant based fare will be a great way to reduced consumption based emissions in the municipality. People can still have choice and cultural based options can still be provided (Every culture has plant-based great food) . An organisation called Greener by Default [Greener by Default](#) can help. Nowhere is it written that all food MUST have eggs, dairy or meat in them by default and it's time to shake up the narrative for the planet. When we currently talk about the environment and the industries responsible for harming the planet, we are still fixated on fossil fuel and focusing on electrification as the way to mitigate the harm. Even with grants available, not many people can afford an electric vehicle, a heat pump or solar panels...the vast majority of people can eat a plant based snack or meal. Nudging and transitioning to plant-based is often cheaper, healthier and an almost invisible way to reduce consumption based emissions. This initiative will take very little money and is mainly a policy change. Some money for plant based meats, cheeses, ice cream etc may be added to ease the transition as the pricing of those items do not benefit from the economy of scale and the industries producing them do not get the grants and subsidies allotted to animal agriculture by federal and provincial governments. Saanich has already made changes, I hope Victoria is open to making changes as well.

Please also designate more money in dealing with graffiti in Victoria. It is an ongoing eyesore and private residents should not have to shoulder the cost for graffiti on their business, fence, homes etc because there is an out-of-control crime element operating here. Please ensure BC Hydro cleans graffiti off of their equipment in a timely manner (At present, cleanup seems to only be complaint driven). A full time position and equipment is needed to erase graffiti and restore surfaces to their pre-graffiti state. (Are there no paints or clear coatings that will make future graffiti more difficult and/or clean up easier?)

Please continue to deal with reducing crime, finding solutions for the unhoused and addicted and make Victoria safer.

Shore power is needed in James Bay for the cruise ships.

Thank you,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Budget Input
Date: January 6, 2026 at 4:34 PM
To: Legislative Services email legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I just want to quickly voice my disapproval of the massive increase to the police budget. Relative to other municipalities, our spending on police is already high.

The humane, reliable, lasting, and effective solutions to homelessness and drug addiction is not policing. It is social support.

That funding would be better spent elsewhere - from affordable housing / non market housing, drug rehabilitation, counseling / mental health resources, library funding, and so on.

I am disappointed that the focus has been on policing away issues caused by poverty.

Thanks for listening,

Fernwood

From:
Subject: Budget input
Date: December 15, 2025 at 3:20 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Greetings. Once again I find myself imploring decision makers to honestly review the value taxpayers get from city services

Repeatedly I have asked for comparisons of city staff vs private companies on task such as major concrete jobs (1 month for 1 block of Fernwood?), milling & paving (2 days on my road and job left at 2:30 pm on a Friday still undone) and arborists (come join them for their excessive coffee breaks sometime)

It's in your court. Donate right thing. Govern for the taxpayer. Not for CUPE

Sent from my iPhone

From:
Subject: Budget opposition
Date: January 23, 2026 at 12:18 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____, and I am a Victoria resident and renter. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers.

As a renter, a caregiver, and a disabled person living with mental illness, I find this proposed increase not only irresponsible but deeply offensive. VicPD already consumes an outsized share of our city's resources, and yet the City is proposing to raise its operating budget from \$68.2 million to \$78 million, bringing VicPD's total budget to roughly \$90 million. Victoria's share alone will account for nearly a quarter of the entire municipal budget in 2026. VicPD already costs more per capita than any other municipal police department or RCMP municipal unit in British Columbia, and Council is now being asked to push that cost even higher.

This is not just a budget line item; it's a political choice with real-world consequences. In order to fund this massive increase for police and bylaw services, the City is proposing cuts to the very programs that actually build safer, more resilient communities. Arts, culture, and events funding is set to be reduced by 18%. Community grants, neighbourhood supports, climate action, citywide planning, tenant assistance, and equity initiatives are all facing cuts. At the same time, bylaw services are proposed to increase by an astonishing 80%. Meanwhile, the total proposed budget for the Greater Victoria Public Library is just \$6.9 million, and Parks & Recreation only \$22.7 million. These comparisons highlight the City's misplaced priorities.

As someone who relies on community services and social infrastructure to survive and care for others, I am disgusted that resources are being stripped from vital departments to fund police, especially when there is no evidence that more police prevent crime or improve public safety. Police do not address the root causes of harm. They do not create housing, provide mental health care, support caregivers, or build community resilience. Over-policing has repeatedly been shown to cause harm to disabled people, people with mental illness, and those already marginalized, while doing little to make our city safer.

Furthermore, the increased funding for VicPD and bylaw services will inevitably lead to more harm to our most vulnerable residents, especially those experiencing homelessness. The City continues to rely on police to manage and disrupt the lives of unhoused individuals, seizing their belongings and causing further trauma. This money could instead be invested in long-term solutions that address the root

The money could instead be invested in long-term solutions that address the root causes of homelessness, such as affordable housing, mental health services, and supportive community programs.

Public safety is not achieved by expanding police budgets. It comes from ensuring that our communities' basic needs are met, from stable housing to accessible healthcare, strong community programs, arts and culture, climate resilience, and real social supports. Council has a choice: continue capitulating to VicPD's ever-expanding demands, or invest in the services that actually prevent harm and allow people to live with dignity. By defunding arts, culture, and community programs to fund policing, the City is undermining the very fabric of our community.

I urge you to reject this proposed increase and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community investments. We need to fund the solutions that prevent harm at its root and ensure that all residents can thrive.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to how you allocate public funds and whose safety and well-being you prioritize.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Budget priorities
Date: January 9, 2026 at 10:32 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi Victoria,

This note is to say I disagree with the proposed increase in Vic PD funding. They should not hire 25 new officers, and they should find ways to reduce their spending, like the rest of us. Demilitarizing their kit and training would be a good place to start.

We should continue to invest in active transport and walkable streets, and take the lead in renewing Island rail.

Jackson St,
Victoria

From:
Subject: BUDGE I
Date: December 14, 2025 at 12:44 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#) Cut bikes lanes and stupid galloping goose upgrade. You INCOMPETENT idiot IMBECILES. 2 mayor's and council out of touch with voters. Time for all you FUCKING MORONS TOO GO.

From:
Subject: Call for LESS police funding
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:13 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Tolmie Ave. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

a. I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go towards more housing for those in need and social programs, not hiring more police officers, because I know that community is what keeps us safe, not cops.

b. As an artist and community organizer, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

c. As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

d. As a person with lived/living experience of mental health, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

e. As a caregiver of children, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

I acknowledge that I live, work, and learn on the unceded and traditional territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən Peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and the W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples, who have had relationships with this land since time immemorial, which continue to this day.

From:
Subject: City Budget 2026
Date: January 7, 2026 at 11:18 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi folks!

Just adding my 2 cents' worth to the proposed 2026 budget. I've been a proud citizen of the City of Victoria since 2010, and, of all the places I've called home, this town is definitely my favourite.

Like you (and absolutely everyone), I have watched our downtown core become a gathering place for those who have been neglected and abused by our increasingly inequitable society. After decades of governments at all levels shirking their responsibilities to our most vulnerable citizens, we now have homelessness and addiction occupying our every thought, our city centres, our moral compasses. Again, this is the result of steady reductions in care, in affordability, in education and in general services for the underserved members of our society over the past 3 or 4 decades. What we know for certain is that enforcement DOES NOT solve this global crisis. What we also know for certain is that social services and affordable housing DOES solve this human crisis that has mushroomed in every community across the globe.

So, back to Budget 2026, and the proposed 5.02% increase for Vic PD. I will ask you to study the success (or lack thereof) rate of throwing vast amounts of cash at the cops over the past decade or so. Has this done anything to actually solve the multi-crises of poverty and addiction? Has this proven successfully preventative to make our city safer (for everyone, not just us comfy housed folk)? Is this really value for dollars? In my opinion, as someone who has supported the Housing First movement for many years, this requested 5.02% increase to the coffers of a police department that is not even remotely equipped to address the root of the problems we face is a ruthless money-grab on their part, and would be a tragic waste of tax dollars. I say invest that money in community services, in tiny home villages, in supervised consumption sites and dignified shelter. I am so impressed with the collaboration between the City and Peer2Peer Indigenous Society to help unhoused individuals return to their homes and their communities. I can only imagine what other incredible (and practical) services the City of Victoria might invest in with that proposed 5.02% increase for Vic PD!

I know we all want to 'clean up' our streets, make our city safer, and not have to look at the reality of a broken society. Policing has never been the answer, and won't be the answer no matter how many tax dollars we throw at it. We need real services and affordable housing for our most vulnerable neighbours. "We rise by lifting others". So, for the love of everything we cherish about our beautiful city, please do NOT waste my taxes on increasing the police budget!

<https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.letters-from-a-canadian.com%2F&data=05%7C02%7Clegislativeservices%40victoria.ca%7Ccc2b90aaa1a04a92e73208de4e214ddf%7Cd7098116c6e84d2a89eedb15b6c23375%7C0%7C0%7C639034103350826250%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMmIsIkFOljoiTWFpbCIsIl dUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2Ff6ZDfw7L%2FspiuC7Sla1714PAgJtaKTVz7pkxqfhivl%3D&reserved=0>

From:
Subject: City Budget
Date: January 8, 2026 at 1:31 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I would cut 20 million from the Police City Budget, and use that 20 million to hire nurse practitioners, social workers, and one or two doctors in order to have a wrap around vetting of the un-housed. Give medical help and counselling to help them not only with transitional housing, but educate/help them on how to get clean if they are addicted, guide them to start to do volunteer work in their community, then paid work in their community, then teach them how to interview for jobs, how to dress appropriately etc. Ask them what interests them so that they can apply for a job that they would enjoy, and as soon as possible, provide them with individual homes/rooms.

The Victoria police manage to manipulate council and residents that they need more and more and more money in their budget. It's time to set a realistic budget for them. They should also be advised to train and re-train their officers on how to de-escalate violence in their interactions. In fact a special phone number should be set-up for people with mental health issues, so that their family/friends can call for a nurse & social worker (there are many male nurses if you're worried about the strength needed), to find resolution to the problem and **not call 911**. The police have been too trigger happy and truly need re-training in de-escalating violence.

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: City of Victoria Budget Feedback
Date: January 16, 2026 at 1:29 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am writing as a Victoria resident (James Bay, renter), and as a person who works in downtown Victoria.

As noted in the survey report, residents identified poverty and homelessness as the most pressing issue facing the city (per the survey report, "41%, up eight percentage points"), with public safety and crime as a concern but a significantly less pressing one ("public safety" (9%), "downtown safety/crime" (4%), "crime (general)" (3%) and "policing/law enforcement" (2%)). Despite this, the police budget increase makes up almost half of the city's proposed tax increase. Taken together, this indicates to me a concerning tendency to criminalize poverty and homelessness, which is borne out by the bylaw sweeps that continually happen on Pandora. I do appreciate the recent announcement about the increase in beat cops because I believe that the relationship building that comes out of that can be beneficial to improving outcomes, particularly for street entrenched and homeless folks. That said, I will be watching with interest to see the impacts of this massive increase in the police budget, and firmly believe that increased funding to upstream initiatives would be a better use of that money.

Thank you for your consideration and for the work you do to make our community more inclusive, welcoming, and safe.

Kindly,

From:
Subject: City of Victoria Financial Plan
Date: January 23, 2026 at 11:03 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Southgate Street and a registered social worker within the healthcare system and I am writing to express my concern regarding the suggested increase in the budget for the Victoria Police Department.

I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers for multiple reasons but the main being the statistical evidence that more police presence does not equal a safer city but rather an increase in violence toward our most vulnerable populations. I cannot fathom the reasoning behind hiring more police officers to 'increase public safety' when most folks impacted by police presence are simply in need of compassionate, trauma informed care, stable housing and equal food access. We cannot expect a different outcome for this city by hiring more police to routinely harass folks in mental health crises, unhoused people and those who are dying due to the toxic drug crisis.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs, harm reduction support, food programs and outreach. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs, addressing the root cause of our cities' needs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Southgate Street, Victoria BC

From:
Subject: City tax Increase
Date: January 7, 2026 at 8:27 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

The proposed increase to the city budget is absolutely unacceptable. Council needs to go back to the drawing board and request that every department come in with no more than a 3% increase over the previous year. If some areas are priorities in line with strategic plans and need larger increases, so be it, but those increases need to be funded with cutbacks in other less strategically important areas. Manage things, people! The Citizens simply cannot swallow these outrageous increases. Find the money.

"Do one thing every day that scares you." | Eleanor Roosevelt

From:
Subject: comment on proposed 2026 budget
Date: January 18, 2026 at 11:01 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good afternoon,

I'd like to offer the following comment to City Council.

I'm a Victoria resident (homeowner) and I have some serious concerns about the police budget.

I understand that the VicPD board proposes a budget and the City can decide to accept or reject it.

In the past a number of city councillors have argued that rejecting it would simply lead to VicPD appealing to the province.

The police, however, has obtained every single budget increased they've asked for in the past years with little to show for.

VicPD is already the most expensive police force in BC per capita, spends hundreds of thousands of dollars on toys like drones, AI, and a militarized armored vehicle, and various items that frankly have nothing to do with the root causes of poverty and crime in our city.

I live a block from Pandora so I'm very aware of the issues our cities faces. It's the programs such as SOLID or Our Place - which I'm glad the City partly funds - that are offering the solutions we need, not police and bylaw officers harassing some of our most vulnerable residents.

If David Eby wants to make Victoria residents pay for more police officers, he should be bearing the political cost of that decision. Council needs to stop hiding behind the police budget and make their voices heard clearly. VicPD is completely unaccountable to Victoria residents and rubber stamping their budget will only make it worse.

Best,

From:
Subject: Comment on the budget - a request and a suggestion.
Date: January 16, 2026 at 8:32 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc:

Good afternoon,

I very much appreciate that Council is giving people the opportunity to weigh in on the budget and I would be happy to comment and provide suggestions however there is important information missing that will color everything I suggest. Specifically I see you have included the "Actual" 2024 numbers but not those numbers vs the budget for 2024. Did all the departments responsible for the spend meet their budgets? Similarly, I see the the budget for 2025 but not the actual "spend" YTD. I lived a business life that required "budget vs actual" reporting MONTHLY and then ANOVAR (analysis of variance) reports to the Board with complete information on ALL variances over 5% , or over a specific number, for every line item. This was how I was required to run the business - to be accountable for funding AND for results. Incidentally, it was a global business and the numbers were large.

Only when I understand what the 2025 budget accomplished with the money that was spent (and the reasons for over and underspent funds) would I be able to ask smart questions about the 2026 budget proposal. Yes, this could be getting WAY into the weeds and more learning/studying than what any ordinary community member (or government employee!) would be willing to do. BUT, with that information in hand and a smart young person running some AI analysis on those numbers using REALLY good queries....you could present charts and graphs and 'predictive' information that could be much more easily understood. AI tools are your not-so-secret weapon for creating information that truly informs us citizens using context and data in minutes...even seconds.

By now it should be possible to see the spend month by month for the 2025 financial year on your 'key categories' of municipal spend. I'm guessing that the spend in any "underspent" categories close to the year end will have suddenly accelerate and be "on" or "over" budget by the year end. This is the inevitable practice of all organizations (government and corporate) to "find a place to spend the money so we don't lose the allocation to that line item for next budget." I have spoken with government employees who have actually been put in charge of finding places to spend the rest of the assigned budget(s) for their area just so the allocation in the subsequent budget isn't reduced.

I'm sure the 2026 budget is an aggregation of what every service/department/project manager has prepared for their area with an eye to expected cost increases beyond last year's budget (not actual). That said, I have reviewed the budget in some detail and here (without the benefit of the aforementioned) is what I see and my thoughts: (Forgive my use of "revenue" to mean both revenue and funding sources.)"

1. I see increases in Community Safety and Bylaw services (good), The optics and the reality matter hugely.
2. A decrease in Arts/Culture and Events (bad) - the arts are a significant contributor to culture and right now we need shared culture...especially CANADIAN culture. Arts bring people OUT from behind their phone screens and into communication and community.
3. I don't know what role the city plays in "Economic Development" but any reduction in programs that contribute to the economy should be a priority.
4. I see an expectation for a profitable Conference Center with a big decrease in marketing (how?),
5. I see less money for Communications and Engagement (see my last paragraph below),
6. I can't comment on Public Works (especially with no budget vs actual results for 2025), but the focus should be on absolute fundamentals (water, sewer and electrical) without the additional cost of building yet more bike lanes right now. Just the basics please.
7. Sad to see "climate action" being financially diminished when now is the right time to build climate resilience through rooftop solar, greenspace enhancements etc etc.. Why not give an advantage/fast track to all projects that include climate enhancing features?
8. Transportation costs are higher but revenues are lower (than 2024...of course don't know 2025 per my note above) Why?
9. Facilities building maintenance cost is down. Is this just a deferral or have you reduced the facilities needed to run the business of governance(that would be good).
And I note that but administration costs here are up. No savings to be had there? Are you looking into Ai to deliver lower personnel costs? (This is a BIG question)
10. Is there an error in the Legislative Services budget? I think the revenue was meant to be 45k not 450k?
11. Parks and recreation - revenues against expenses are pretty paltry. More sponsorships? Rentals? Higher fee's for users (vs huge contribution from taxpayers).
12. People and culture - no revenue/funding allocation in 2025 or 2026....but \$5.4million in expenses. So is this one of the "cost cuts" for 2026?
13. Corporate - Good to see a drop in funding for "consulting" and professional services. Interesting to see a .73% decrease in funding against a 17% increase in expenses? "Fiscal" and "transfer to own funds" negate the other cost savings...looks like most of the transfers are going to "capital" What is that used for? And why did it go from "0" contingencies in 2024 to \$9.4 million in 2026?

the transfers are going to capital - what is that used for - and why did it go from 0 contingencies in 2024 to \$0.7 million in 2025
What is this for and why so huge?

14. Grants - see my point #2 above.

15. GVPL....all good. A vital community service that supports "community".

16. Capital allocations. More for transit network solutions, less for the bike network. Do it for optics if nothing else!

Royal athletic park AND crystal pool in the same year? How about spreading the park costs over a couple of years...and seek sponsorships (like building wings for hospitals and universities and naming them after the investor). There's some wealth in Victoria...a family legacy project perhaps?

17. I ride a bike. I like having protected bike lanes. I don't need 'education and behaviour modification' so nix that expense. How about fines for 'bad' bikers who don't follow the rules? A new revenue source that my riding suggests would be quite substantial and create more safety for everyone. Riding with no helmet/riding on sidewalks/not stopping at lights/signs, riding a motorized bike (i.e. throttle assist) in bike lanes should be dis-allowed and fine-able. And scooters? Not in bike lanes!

18. Multi-modal corridor improvements shows "0" for 2026 and \$11 million for 2027 then \$5million for 2027. A deferral to reduce this years tax increase? Hmmm.

19. Pandora redevelopment - no funds for 2026? The optics on that aren't great. If the 'planning and design' phase begins this year how will that be funded?

Last item. - I see throughout the budget a number of "one time" references throughout 2025. What is that? Where is that money sourced from? How is it accounted for and where? And it's a bit cheeky to show increase "savings" percentages when calculated against a "one time" last year that is not shown in 2026.

Last comment:

I see some admin cost reductions here and there. That's good and as personnel are such a huge expense EVERY effort to reduce admin (and management) costs are to be applauded. I believe every department is made up of good people wanting to do a good job in their area but where are they being told that they must CUT their spend by x% AND find creative solutions for getting the work done anyway. Yes they will complain mightily and gnash their teeth and struggle...but after that, they might just get down to work and figure it out. I did it for years so I know it's possible - and to still get quality results. So now that big question...what ARE the expected results and what happens if they are met? Or not met? How does this figure into the union negotiations? Don't wait to set the stage for more AI and less people. It won't get easier.

One final contribution to this discussion. [This story](#) came to my attention today. In a time when democracy is under threat, people are losing trust in our institutions and becoming unhappily siloed in their views, this addition to the civic budgeting process has demonstrated important and timely results. And it would address more than just the numbers. It appears the "civic engagement" costs are being lowered in the 2026 budget. Maybe the worst time to do it given this article!

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on the budget.

Regards.

Victoria BC

From:
Subject: Comments on the 2026 Budget
Date: January 19, 2026 at 12:01 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello City of Victoria:

Here are some of my thoughts about the 2026 budget:

1. Obviously the elephant in the room is the Police Budget - Stephen Harrison did an excellent line-by-line analysis of what Mayor and Council should be pushing back on in this budget (<https://www.needsmorepikes.com/blog/2025/11/17/vicpds-budget-stinks>) - **please consider taking aggressive action to not only reduce this year's increase in the police budget but also to break this culture of impunity that has allowed the police budget to balloon by ~52% since 2021** - we are not getting value from this police department and racialized and poor people are frequently the targets for horrendous abuse
2. Why are we paying for upgrades and repairs to Royal Athletic Park (\$6.8 million) and Save On Foods Memorial Centre (\$1.1) - these venues feature events that are mostly paid admission and run by private organizations - so why do the residents of Victoria pay for them?
3. Community Planning - I won't profess to completely understand it myself but I have been reading with interest Patrick Condon's writings around a better way to create PERMANENTLY affordable housing as well as increase tax revenues from land values without creating a heated upward spiral of land overpricing (<https://theyee.ca/Culture/2024/07/19/Patrick-Condon-Why-Housing-Costs-So-High/>)
4. Also on the topic of community planning - and again I don't know if this is within the city's control - how about a truly progressive property tax - if I own a \$5 million home shouldn't I be paying a higher tax rate than if I own a \$1 million home (just as I pay more tax if my income is higher?)
5. In terms of increasing revenue - if the city does well with parking (i.e. if it is an efficient money maker) perhaps we should try making all parking in the city city-run (i.e. get rid of private companies like Robbins etc)
6. Also in terms of increasing revenue - speed cameras, red light cameras etc - with the recent spate of traffic violence (yes, that's what it is - I suggest reading 'Killed by A Traffic Engineer' by Wes Marshall) and maybe even - gasp - a congestion charge of some kind?
7. In terms of Roads and Multimodal Improvements - I hope some of this money is targeted towards improving transit by dedicating bus lanes, giving signal priority and so on

I could go on but these are what I see as my priorities.

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Comments on the Draft Budget
Date: January 15, 2026 at 2:46 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

First off, I do not support an increase in the police budget.

I would like to see budget considerations focus on the established and exemplary work that Victoria has done towards food security. Cutting community garden resources (which are already so minimal) will harm the city. Community gardens are where community is created. More community accountability and beautification leads to better environment and health outcomes and less need for an increased police force.

As a member of the UFT with my non-profit work hat on, the excellent work done by this group and the support they receive from the city should be used as an example of how to stretch community funds.

Thank you,

North Park resident

From:
Subject: Comments re: 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 8, 2026 at 11:32 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Johnson Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a working artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge the Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and resources. Without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with a very brief experience of homelessness after experiencing domestic violence, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. I have personally experienced sexual harassment by the Victoria police while I have walked to and from my office downtown - and no, I was not wearing anything provocative. The police regularly get away with behaviour like this, or worse, and are rarely held accountable. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that are accountable, and that address the root causes of homelessness and crime. Providing people a warm place to sleep and practice hygiene, and accessible and long-term mental health support would reduce safety concerns.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer, and at least in my experience, more often the source of danger and violence than the homeless population. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Concern about the procedure budget for the Victoria Police Department
Date: January 19, 2026 at 11:40 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____, and I am writing to you with concern over the proposed budget for the Victoria Police Department.

Choosing to hire more police officers instead of investing in community safety would be beyond disappointing and would show that the Victoria city council is not operating in the best interest of the people who reside here.

You should know that the Victoria police department is a violent, racist, and unfeeling organization. If you do already know this and are still choosing to support this request submitted by Vicpd, then I truly believe there is something deeply wrong with the inner workings - and the hearts - at the city council.

I personally have been victimized by Vicpd officers. For example, I have been kneeled on by three officers at once in a mental health crisis, which did not cease when I told them they were hurting me, and instead they pushed against me harder. I am a black person living here in Victoria, and maybe you can see how this is more than a small complaint.

The Victoria Police Department is a deeply racist and flawed organization. I have first hand experience and people I interact with in my community has similar - if not worse - stories to mine.

You have the opportunity to reject this budget, and though you say that you can't do anything because the VicPD can appeal the choice, it's not entirely true. You all have been presented with the option to do what is right for the people that live in Victoria, and choosing to fund Vicpd is directly against the safety of the public.

Police do not add to more safety.

Community care like better mental health services, subsidized housing, and addiction services is what we truly need on the island, and if you think police is going to solve any of the prominent problems people face here in Victoria, than the council is ignorant and deaf to the pleading of the citizens.

I hope you choose to make the right decisions.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: Concern Regarding Proposed VicPD Budget Increase
Date: January 21, 2026 at 11:58 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Victoria City Council,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed budget increase for the Victoria Police Department and to advocate for a different approach to community safety that prioritizes social services and housing.

While I understand that our community faces challenges, including the opioid crisis and homelessness, I believe that increasing police funding is not the most effective solution. Research consistently shows that investments in social services, mental health supports, and housing are far more effective at preventing crime than increased policing.

I am particularly troubled by several facts:

Victoria Police already has the highest per capita budget of any municipal police department in British Columbia at \$598 per resident, significantly higher than Vancouver (\$555) and nearly double that of Saanich (\$350). VicPD funding has increased dramatically from \$54 million in 2018 to \$83 million in 2025, yet we continue to see the same community challenges.

Meanwhile, this proposed police budget increase comes alongside cuts to essential services, including the elimination of the Alliance to End Homelessness and reductions in grant spending. This seems counterintuitive when housing instability and poverty are root causes of many issues our community faces.

I urge Council to consider redirecting funding toward proven crime prevention strategies such as affordable housing investments, poverty reduction initiatives, improved mental health and addiction services, enhanced school counselling and educational supports, and meaningful reconciliation efforts with Indigenous communities.

Addressing the root causes of crime through social services and housing creates lasting community safety, while increased policing alone addresses only the symptoms. I believe our community deserves a more comprehensive and effective approach.

Thank you for considering this perspective. I hope Council will prioritize evidence-based, preventative investments that build a safer, healthier community for all residents.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: Concerned Citizen
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:12 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Empress Avenue. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Empress Ave, City of Victoria resident

From:
Subject: Cost of City Budget Survey
Date: January 19, 2026 at 2:00 PM
To: Legislative Services email legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello.

I was very please to see the city did a “professional” survey for the budget discussions.

Can you tell me how much that Ipsos survey cost?
And where I would find similar proposed Ipsos, or others, surveys in
The city budget outline?

Regards.

From:
Subject: Defund the police
Date: January 22, 2026 at 10:00 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs and money in to arts. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. It would also further take money from Arts and Culture in this city which already has a struggle arts scene with lack of venues and spaces.

, Victoria BC

From:
Subject: Defund Vic Pd
Date: January 22, 2026 at 9:59 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there,

I am reaching out to state I believe Vic PD should be defunded and I do not support the draft budget. There is no substantial evidence that supports increases in their budget would reduce crime. I believe these funds would be better spent on social services, affordable housing, art and music hubs, libraries and nature conservation.

I do not support how the Vic PD are managed and believe ardently the city and its communities would benefit from funds being allocated in other ways.

In the last few years we've lost various music venues, Garry oak meadows (the most endangered ecosystem in Canada), coastlines, and wetlands have experienced even more degradation, the homeless communities continue to struggle without meaningful affordable housing options, and drug use remains a challenge for a large population of residents. There are SO many better ways to allocate these funds.

Based on their track record of racism, violence, and unlawful activity, I do not believe there is any sound reason to increase their budget and urge you to consider cutting it to reallocate those funds to services that actually support communities.

We do not need more cops.

Thank you,

Victoria bc

From:
Subject: Disapproval of 10.44% property tax increase
Date: January 12, 2026 at 1:17 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Enough is enough! No one can afford to live here anymore. Please find more creative ways to find money for municipal services and projects than taxing property owners who already can't afford anything as it is. I've seen so many home owners need to sell their properties who can no longer use Airbnb as well.

More budget cuts are required and no more unnecessary renovation projects! Put that money towards helping the unhoused with more treatment centres and mental health support. Thank you.

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All the best,

From:
Subject: Draft Budget 2026
Date: January 20, 2026 at 7:01 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Thank you for this opportunity.

Please reduce staff, staff departments are over staffed and not responsive nor responsible in their departments. This City has too many staff driving around in vehicles. The parks and city works is laughable, especially the leaf collection program, such a failed archaic approach. The city streets and parks are dismal looking with overflowing garbage cans, leaves and waste but employ more people than the work requires. Have a look at the Library's request for increases at a time when e-books are rocketing in popularity, they want new FTE's. Let's have one less council member. Let's look at contracting out more mainstream services and not be burdened with a growing, expensive body of employees. That's a sure way to make savings. I've watched one burned garbage can over four weeks waiting for removal/replacement. Crystal Pool field, follow the number of departmental touches it has had.

City Council needs to find ways to keep supporting and meeting the needs of public community safety and stay in their lane. Nothing is more important than a safe, clean city. The Library request highlights increase in safety costs, every department will be using this budget line item to request more funding.

The past 10 plus years of cuts to community safety, at all levels is key to the current conditions in our city.

Why on your survey presentation page must you divide the city's budget from the policing budget. And why use the word "requesting" in theirs? Are you all not requesting? I see the Library budget as requested, why was their massive increase not presented in these two paragraphs.

Harmony is needed to fuel success.

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 15, 2026 at 4:02 PM
To: Legislative Services email LegislativeServices@victoria.ca

Hello Mayor and Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft budget 2026-2030.

Please, I implore you, reduce the amount we are spending on policing and invest in:

- Arts and Culture
- Libraries
- Parks
- Non-profit grants
- Affordable housing grants

Thank you,

Resident

From:
Subject: Draft budget input
Date: January 18, 2026 at 10:39 PM
To: Legislativeservices legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Humboldt. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

And finally as a person with lived experience mental health and substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time

Humboldt street, City of Victoria resident

From:
Subject: draft budget missing something
Date: January 16, 2026 at 10:27 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, I would like to agree with the opinions re lack of budget funding for urban trees/nature, as expressed in the document available at <https://creativelyunited.org/city-of-victoria-draft-budget-missing-important-details-public-comments-open-until-jan-23rd/>.
thank you

From:
Subject: Draft Budget Plan Concerns
Date: December 13, 2025 at 12:17 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to state my clear opposition to the proposed 10% + property tax increase.

For many residents, property tax is equivalent to a monthly mortgage payment. At a time when affordability is already at a breaking point, asking taxpayers to absorb another major increase is irresponsible and unjustified.

The core issue is not revenue, it is spending. The City continues to fund non-essential and ideologically driven projects while basic services decline and costs spiral out of control. Bike lane expansion, cosmetic “green” initiatives, and underused public amenities have consumed significant public funds while increasing traffic congestion, reducing accessibility, and delivering little measurable benefit.

The City’s attempt to reduce traffic by pushing residents toward bicycle use is fundamentally unrealistic. Most people have families, children, elderly parents, medical needs, emergencies, tools, and work obligations that make driving a necessity. A functioning city cannot be planned around the assumption that residents can abandon vehicles. Policies based on that assumption disproportionately harm working families, seniors, and people with mobility or time constraints.

These decisions reflect a narrow planning perspective that does not align with the day-to-day realities of the majority of residents and businesses. The result has been increased congestion, safety concerns, and growing public frustration.

The City’s current approach to homelessness has also proven costly and ineffective. Enabling encampments without enforcement has increased crime, damaged neighbourhoods, and driven up expenditures for policing, sanitation, healthcare, and infrastructure repairs. This approach is neither compassionate nor sustainable.

Before any tax increase is considered, the City must demonstrate fiscal discipline. This includes:

- An immediate halt to non-essential projects
- A full, independent audit of internal staffing, project management, and contracting
- Clear justification for project costs that appear excessive
- A measurable plan to reduce operating expenses

Until waste is eliminated and accountability is restored, increasing taxes should not be on the table.

Residents expect practical governance, responsible spending, and policies grounded in reality, not continued financial strain to fund projects that do not serve the broader public.

Resident Victoria B.C

Sent from my iPhone

From:
Subject: Dratt budget too high
Date: December 18, 2025 at 10:08 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there,

I am a resident of James Bay and my feedback on the 2026 budget is that it's way too high.

I know there is an infinitely long list of things we'd like to accomplish. However we need to ruthlessly prioritize what actually needs to be done, and most of these need to remain as wishlist items.

A 3 percent spending increase is the maximum acceptable increase. Anything beyond that is reckless and suggests that the governing body is incompetent.

There is a ton of inefficiency in the way government functions and have two examples. Carney says that Shopify can table a proposal in 48 hours where government took 3 months to respond. I've also been to a healthcare hackathon where the vast majority of time was wasted on overhead rather than innovation unlike hackathons in industry. These are typical examples of how effective private companies can perform vs. government. I'd be happy to discuss these in further detail.

Constraints force innovation. The governing body needs to force departments to innovate by capping budget growth at 3 percent growth or potentially cutting spending. For example, ask each department what they would do if their budget was cut by 50%. You might find there's a lot they currently do that are not essential.

Regards,

From:
Subject: Draft Budget
Date: January 12, 2026 at 4:31 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

My comments on the 2026 draft budget:

- If you wish to support affordable housing, you cannot also massively increase property taxes. These two are strongly related: when you raise property taxes, the increase is then passed on to tenants in rental increases. Where they are unable to pass on the increases due to rental restrictions, they often defer necessary maintenance, sometimes to the point where properties become slums. Is this the Victoria you want to create?
- Property tax increases should be held to, **at maximum**, BC's rate of inflation. No workers are getting wage increases above that amount, so City Hall should **not** be expecting taxpayers to tighten their belts and suck up unsustainable levels of tax increases.
- If you cannot afford various projects without a massive tax increase (i.e., more than the rate of inflation, or roughly 3%), slow down on infrastructure projects and upgrades: these can be done over time instead of all at once. E.g., \$209.2 M to Crystal Pool and \$6.8 M to Royal Athletic Park could be done over a few years instead of all at once.
- Similarly, slow down on the electric vehicle infrastructure: this can be done over time instead of the bulk of it within the next two years. Keep it to no more than \$0.5 M per year.
- I think this has already been removed from the budget, but if it has not: **do not** proceed with **any** of the proposed changes to Centennial Square. This is a vanity project and **not** a necessity. Policing, road repairs and infrastructure maintenance are necessities. Everything else is "nice to have." And the initiative to remove the 100+-year-old sequoia tree is just small-minded.
- And why are we paying almost \$0.5 M for an Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion? Surely this is at best one full-time position, worth at most \$80 K plus benefits?
- Road maintenance is a requirement. Repaving the entrances to side-streets so that they are more driveway-style (concrete, with a significant bump up/down to the pavement), however, is another vanity project that is not necessary, serving only to increase the cost of paving projects.
- While you are at it, perhaps you could coordinate street "improvements" and construction projects so that traffic in the city is not constantly at a standstill due to too many projects being undertaken at once with no thought given to how traffic will flow. While the goal may be to encourage cycling through making traffic a horrible proposition at best, this is massively unfriendly to: a) disabled people who need their vehicles, b) businesses trying to do their jobs, c) the environment (vehicles idling in traffic), and d) the cyclists who are trying to navigate through the gridlock.

Personally, I am dismayed by many of the changes the city has made over the past two years. Many of the "improvements" have made traffic significantly worse, without improving either street disorder or the perception of safety downtown. Quit with the vanity projects and optional things the city cannot afford. You are contributing to the lack of affordability in this city with every budget in which taxes are expected to increase over the rate of inflation. Please quit being part of the problem.

From:
Subject: Dratt financial plan concerns and comments
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:04 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing at _____. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

First, as a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere. Furthermore, living on the corner of Quadra and Pandora has put me on the front lines to view the harm and lack of resources that unhoused individuals live with daily. The continuous police raids and overall distrust with people in positions of authority suggests that changes are necessary for a positive outcome.

Second, as a person with living experience of mental health challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs. It is proven that harm reduction saves lives while over-policing and a lack of resources causes irreversible harm and trauma to those impacted.

Additionally, as an Educator, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs. Direct more funding and research to harm reduction, safe consumption sites, and public safety that doesn't continue to traumatize individuals in our community.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Draft Financial Plan Feedback
Date: January 21, 2026 at 11:34 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

As a resident and business taxpayer I am writing to lodge my opposition to the police funding increase request that is so impactful on the upcoming city budget plan.

Victoria Police funding has ballooned massively year over year for the past five years, taking far too much energy and resources away from investments that actually support and materially improve our community, while delivering far too little peace, justice or restitution.

I urge council to say no the unbalanced and unfair demands of police for more money year after year, and encourage them to demand more from an institution that does too little to extend it's aspirations beyond punitive and criminalizing actions.

Thank you for your consideration to this vital matter.

From:
Subject: Dratt financial plan for 2026-2030
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:39 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I reside on Summit avenue in Victoria.

I am writing to urge you to reject the Victoria Police Department's demands for a budget increase. As a homeowner in Victoria, I do not want my property taxes going to increase an already bloated police department. There is, to put it bluntly, no problem in this city that eight police officers can address that seven of them cannot.

As an artist and a patron of arts in Victoria, I am appalled by the proposed cuts to arts and culture in the proposed budget. This city needs more art and artists and not more police.

While I understand and indeed share the concerns that many Victoria residents have about public safety, more policing is not a solution to this problem, and I exhort you to not capitulate to the VicPD's unreasonable demands. Our money is better spent on social and community programs.

Thank you for your time,
_____, Victoria resident.

From:
Subject: Dratt financial plan
Date: January 22, 2026 at 4:07 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I am a resident of Victoria and I do not want any more of my tax dollars going towards the vic police department. They have more than enough funding as it is for the police in one of the safest cities in the world. I would much rather see my money spent on services for unhoused people, environmental initiatives, bctransit or public housing projects than on hiring more thugs to roam the streets looking for people to intimidate. We do not need more police or a higher police budget. We need better municipal services.

From:
Subject: Dramatic increase in police taxes.
Date: January 15, 2026 at 8:14 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I am 100% against further increases in the police budget. Last year my taxes for police increased by 9.1%!! The year before, 18.4%!!

Please! We need to stop this madness. I am not a defund the police kind of guy, just against ever increasing dollars for one service in our budget.

I see an earlier budget proposal from Nov 9 showed a possible increase in taxes excluding police at 8.29% and an increase for police at 5.02%. Now the proposal is for taxes for everything but police at 5.42% and for police at 5.02%. Why? What did you cut from community related budgets? Why not a corresponding cut to the police budget?

there has only been one year in the past 10 where the police budget was decreased. That was 2023 when they were handed a 1.3% decrease. the overall decrease that year was 4.1%. Why the difference? Why is the police budget always treated differently the budgets for the rest of city services?

I am not happy about this at all. There is some indication that the average salary for a police officer in Victoria is \$191,000. In Thunder Bay it is \$91,000. Ridiculous if this is in fact true.

Why do we pay police so much and yet paramedics (provincial) earn on average \$68,000?! Once again, ridiculous!! I understand the police are municipal employees while paramedics are provincial. I also understand from history that the city will give to the police whatever money they ask for while the province holds line pretty tightly on paramedic salary increases. I guess the police will scream louder than paramedics if they don't get what they want.

The draft financial plan updated to the end of December 2025 shows an increase in the police budget of 11.96%. This is quite different than the 5.02% you are telling us it will be. Please explain to me the discrepancy.

It is way past time to reign in the police budget, way past!

Regards,

Victoria, BC.

From:
Subject: Excessive Police Funding in the New Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 1:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Bowker Avenue. I am writing to condemn and voice opposition for the 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am disturbed and disgusted by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I demand Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as subsidized housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I and many others might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived experience in mental health and substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass, steal from, and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks.

We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs. State funded thugs tear gassing people from atop their bat mobiles during wellness checks is not an acceptable form of mental health service, nor is it community safety. It is fascism, full stop.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. I also know that more police are the antithesis of a real solution. I demand Mayor and Council stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Feedback for 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 19, 2026 at 5:17 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Moss Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go toward housing for the unhoused, social programs supporting women and children, and arts and culture, not hiring more police officers.

I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for many people to find community and get a foothold in this city.

I want to see the city investing in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime like community medics, mental health first responders, services for homeless people, substance abuse programs, food access, workforce development, abortion services, and victim support.

Furthermore, as a parent of a young person, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

Thank you for your time,

Moss Street, City of Victoria Resident]

From:
Subject: Feedback for 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 21, 2026 at 8:39 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Palisade Place. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

Furthermore, as an outreach worker, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Palisade Place, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Feedback on 2026 Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 1:59 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

The proposed 10+% increase is unreasonable. The unchecked growth in taxation in Victoria is contributing to the affordability crisis. Salaries and benefits are 54% of the operating expenses, which needs to be reduced. The growth of the number of staff of the City have far outpaced population growth in the past few years. There should be hiring freezes and consolidation of jobs, made possible by the efficiencies of technology. Too much money is being wasted on inefficient government bloat.

From:
Subject: Feedback on 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 7, 2026 at 8:27 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Council,

Thank you for allowing me to provide feedback on the draft budget.

In short, now is not the time for an insane 10%+ property tax increase. These continuing increases are completely unsustainable. The city needs to be working harder to balance the yearly budget.

Personal needs to be cut where it is not needed and added where it is needed. Every day I walk around this city and see 5 people working on a 2 man job. Council should not be giving themselves wage increases while the budget is exploding.

Please make more cuts to bring the budget down. These large tax increases will continue to degrade the city of Victoria at an excellerated rate. This is plain to see. The public is losing trust.

Regards,

From:
Subject: Feedback on 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 20, 2026 at 11:06 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am writing to submit feedback on the 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan. As a resident of Victoria for nearly a decade, I currently live on View Street in downtown Victoria. I am invested in the continued success of this city. I am a home (condo) owner in downtown Victoria, an active citizen, and I am very engaged in our community—this draft budget will *directly* affect me, my neighbours, and my community in the coming years.

Many of the budget items such as Climate Action, Infrastructure Projects and Upgrades, and City Grants will provide significant improvements to the City and benefit its residents. Upgrades to Crystal Pool and increased accessibility to public washrooms are also excellent additions to the budget. I commend the council for their investment in these public goods.

However, there is one budget item that I **strongly oppose**. I **do not** agree with the 5.02 per cent requested increase from the Victoria Police. I hope the council will seriously consider removing this increase from the budget and re-allocating or saving these funds. As described in the draft budget, Victoria's share of the police budget is already a staggering \$77.99 million dollars. By contrast, services like the Greater Victoria Public Library and the Victoria Fire Department budgets are a fraction of what VPD already spends—and these are vital institutions to the safety and health of our City.

Upon reviewing the line items for the VPD budget (pages 116-117 of the detailed draft FP), I notice that many of the expenditures are for non-urgent items: upgrades to furniture, building upgrades such as painting, IT-related replacements, and added fleet vehicles. To me, such a budget increase is an incredibly irresponsible use of taxpayer dollars.

Community safety is incredibly important to me and the citizens of Victoria, but this particular increase does not reflect those values; it is not a productive use of our residents' money.

I urge the council not to go forward with the proposed budget increase for Victoria Police Department.

There is an upcoming municipal election this year and I will be carefully monitoring how the current council chooses to allocate the budget.

Thank you for taking the time to read my feedback.

City of Victoria Resident

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Feedback on Draft Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 1:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi,

I didn't have time to read the whole budget unfortunately as the document was a bit too long. Anyways, just wanted to chime in with my own asks and suggestions:

- Don't get rid of flowers or the bike valet. I love the bike valet and it is one of the reasons I go downtown to do shopping and stuff.
- Consider Automated Speed Enforcement or corporate advertising as additional revenue sources. Or consider obtaining revenue from cruise ships. I think Victoria should seriously consider other sources of revenue.
- Continue to lobby senior levels of government to step into their areas of jurisdiction (health, homelessness, etc. affordable housing). Ideally, Victoria should be stepping away from these areas and letting other governments step in here.
- Keep up with infrastructure improvements. I love all the new bike lanes and sidewalks that have been built by the City.
- Consider more dock space like Bamfield Park.

Vic West

From:
Subject: Feedback on Draft City Budget
Date: January 22, 2026 at 5:14 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is [redacted] I am a Victoria resident living on Vancouver Street, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities particularly evidenced by their lack of care and blatantly violent treatment towards vulnerable populations of people such as those who are unhoused.

Our taxes should be invested in people and community well-being such as housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, connected, and supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

As renter in this City, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

City of Victoria resident

From:
Subject: Feedback on the 2026 budget
Date: January 12, 2026 at 2:47 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am writing with feedback on the City of Victoria's 2026 budget.

My main feedback is to reject the VicPD request for a budget increase.

From community grants, the library, climate action, and other areas, I have received immense benefit as a resident of Victoria.

From VicPD, I have experienced violent policing while in crisis, witnessed abuse towards unhoused neighbours, and complete lack of supportive responses after a violent incident.

This isn't just anecdotal, there is substantial evidence about the harm of policing to marginalized communities and the problematic offloading of social responsibility (e.g., health, poverty reduction) onto enforcement.

Please prioritize the health, safety, wellbeing, and humanity of all community members in the City of Victoria and decline to increase VicPD funding.

Thank you very much

From:
Subject: Feedback on the 2026 Draft Budget
Date: December 17, 2025 at 12:02 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor and Council,

I have been following Council's budget deliberations closely, and appreciate the care that you have put into making these difficult tradeoffs.

I have the following general comments about the budget:

- I do not agree with the decision to move the Multi-Modal Corridor investments to 2027. While I understand the decision will have minimal impact next year, and I very much appreciate
- I understand that decisions around the Police budget are extremely difficult, both technically and politically. I further understand that Council has limited ability to influence the police
- I remain upset by the decision, made last March, to pay for Crystal Pool costs by reducing other city services. When I voted YES for the pool, I was voting for a tax increase to pay

When you compare what people are paying across the country, property taxes in Victoria are quite low, and will remain low even if we have a 10% or more increase in 2026. The following

Municipality	CREA HPI Composite Benchmark	Property Tax	Basic Grant	Total Paid
	971,100.00	7,323.00	0.00	7,323.00
Essex	560,200.00	6,706.00	0.00	6,706.00
Windsor	388,100.00	4,811.00	0.00	4,811.00
London	420,000.00	4,258.00	0.00	4,258.00
Victoria	879,500.00	4,576.00	(570.00)	4,006.00
Winnipeg	335,600.00	3,993.00	0.00	3,993.00
Edmonton	570,100.00	3,769.00	0.00	3,769.00
Calgary	560,200.00	3,462.00	0.00	3,462.00
Greater Vancouver	1,141,200.00	3,555.00	(570.00)	2,985.00

Once you factor in BC's homeowner grant, the actual amount paid here in Victoria is below

Council should focus on our social and infrastructure needs, and should stop dithering over arbitrary numbers like "4%" for the city portion, or "10%" overall. Magic numbers do not make sense. And, finally, please NEVER do again what you did on March 3, 2025 and request staff to produce a financial plan based on a single number. Instead, ask them to produce budgets based on realistic assumptions. All that said, I deeply appreciate Council's decisions to keep many of the programs that would have had to have been cut to reach that 4% number. Thank you for the hard work you do. I

Sincerely,

Victoria

From:
Subject: Feedback on the 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 6, 2026 at 6:34 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide feedback.

I am a citizen in Victoria for the past 9 years, privileged to co-own my home, a health care provider in the community and hospital, and a parent.

I am fully supportive of using the financial privilege of those of us who own houses (through property taxes) to fund a significant portion of the city budget.

I am appalled to see what a massive percentage of the city's current, and even higher proposed, budget is dedicated to funding the police. If I could find a legal way to withhold my property tax portion that funds the police, I would do so without hesitation and I know many members of my neighborhood and community would do the same.

We know from research and case studies/examples in other areas and countries that increasing police funding and presence while continued housing, food, and health care insecurity prevail for so many, and especially those most vulnerable members of our city, only serves to increase violence against the most vulnerable and does not solve the root of any of these problems.

I know the Victoria city council and mayor to be an intelligent, creative, and drive group of compassionate humans, and I know that you must also be aware of this reality.

I read through the draft budget overview as well as the community engagement document, and it is abundantly clear that those with lived experience of housing, food, health care insecurities are communicating deeply valuable information in these sessions- police and bylaw presence on the streets, in the gaping holes where extensive accessible mental health, addictions, housing, and other resources should be, is not just unhelpful but tremendously harmful. I have seen this firsthand too, in community, and as a health care provider.

It chilled me to read that 77 million dollars are allocated to the Vic PD, while a mere 2.7 million (3.5% of the police budget!!) is dedicated to urban design, heritage, *housing*, social planning, equity and tenant assistance COMBINED.

How can we imagine a future for Victoria where there is improved quality of living for all of the humans who live here, when people with addictions, mental health disorders, houseless indigenous youth, low income families who can't find a safe place to rent, youth who have aged out of foster care, etc, can never dream of accessing all of the services they need to meet their basic needs, while the abusing police and bylaw forces continue to receive more and more funding?

I want to see the police funding *decrease* each term, while housing, equity and social services and tenant assistance are proportionally *increased* - in this way we might actually see and hope for more equity and less crisis in this city, rather than the opposite.

I want to be able to tell my child that the adults who run this city and the community around her actually cares about all of the people who live here and will channel our money and time and resources to the betterment of everyone (the most vulnerable humans especially)- that is the world and community she wants to see.

Sincerely,

From: Jamila Douhaibi executivedirector@bcblackhistory.ca
Subject: Feedback on the updated 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 19, 2026 at 6:42 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

In reviewing the draft budget, one piece stands out as negatively impacting the Victoria community. Increasing taxes by over ten percent is not financially feasible for many members of the community that are barely getting by, or only doing so with the assistance of support from family, friends, community and places like Red Cedar.

Victoria Police do not need a 5% increase in budget, along with increased money to bylaw. What we need is increased support for groups that are already doing the work to support the community, places like Cool-Aid. More funding needs to go towards solving issues before they require police presence. If increases are needed, it's only in the areas of community services.

I hope you'll take this into consideration when finalizing the budget.

Warmest regards,
Jamila

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Jamila Douhaibi
(she/they)
Executive Director, [BC Black History Awareness Society](#)

Living and working on unceded [WSÁNEĆ](#) and lək'wəŋən territory
Land back, Black Lives Matter, every day is Black history day

From:
Subject: FEEDBACK on updated 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 12, 2026 at 12:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

My name is

I am a civil servant nearing retirement and the owner of a 1938 triplex in VicWest, with two units rented at below-market rates.

I provide these rentals because I believe stable, affordable housing matters, particularly in older buildings that require ongoing care.

The proposed 10.44% municipal property tax increase for 2026, combined with Capital Regional District levies and water rate increases projected to exceed 20%, creates a growing gap between rising operating costs and the provincially capped rent increase of 3%. These are fixed, non-discretionary expenses that small-scale housing providers cannot easily absorb.

I am committed to continuing to offer these rental homes, but the cumulative effect of these increases raises real questions about long-term feasibility.

For context, Metro Vancouver has approved a 2.5% property tax increase for 2026.

I urge Council to consider the combined impacts of municipal and regional costs on housing affordability and on the sustainability of Victoria's existing, below-market rental stock.

I am the descendant of Scottish & Anglo-German people all of whom were colonizers. I am a settler. I have been privileged to reside, on the traditional homeland of the lək̓ʷəŋən speaking (Kosapsum & Songhees), Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ (Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum) peoples. I express my profound gratitude for their welcome and tolerance as I work to dismantle my colonial, patriarchal, and racist cultural biases.

Please, when you see me stumble - or unaware that I am misstepping; help me learn to become better by letting me know.

Huy ch q'u (Thank you)

"Yours, as always in perpetual service"

From:
Subject: Feedback Re- Budget/tax increases.
Date: January 13, 2026 at 1:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, Please stop spending money on anything that will not contribute to peace, order, and good governance. The tax hikes to fund dream projects are negatively impacting vibrancy, as no one can afford to do anything
Please focus on doing more with less.
Thankyou

From:
Subject: Financial Dratt Plan 2026
Date: January 8, 2026 at 11:39 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Mayor Alto and Council,

Just a concerned citizen weighing in on the ludicrous proposal of 14% increase in the police budget.

There is a wealth of information worldwide pointing to how policing doesn't provide the solutions to the socioeconomic challenges people and organizations are facing in places not unlike so-called Victoria.

Don't be bullied into spending money on a police force when it would clearly be better allocated to community services and data driven solutions.

Thank you for your time and service.

Kindly,

Sent from my iPhone

From:
Subject: Financial plan opposition
Date: January 14, 2026 at 10:12 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Clifton Terrace. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a human being, I am disgusted by the way increased surveillance and violence toward the most marginalized is prioritized to protect the assets of the most wealthy. You cannot fool us with your propaganda for "safer streets". We are the ones walking these streets, living in these neighborhoods and we are sick of watching them be ravaged by state sanctioned violence. We are seeing right now how the heart of policing operates with ICE in the USA. These budget increases represent the slow decline in our freedoms being stolen from us, and our tax dollars being stolen for programming we are opposed to. You care about people? The residents of Victoria? Stop stealing our money to pay for a system that does nothing but harass us, steal from us, and violate us.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

From:
Subject: Fucking BS - incompetent amateurs running multi million dollar cities
Date: January 6, 2026 at 6:04 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Inflation is normal. How many of you clowns actually live in Victoria?
Can't wait to vote you all out
Brutal mismanagement of resources

Signed home owner


From:
Subject: Funding
Date: January 22, 2026 at 3:06 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Graham Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived/living experience of homelessness, mental health, or substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Graham st, City of Victoria Resident

From: Engagement-External engage@victoria.ca
Subject: FW: Budget
Date: January 12, 2026 at 8:03 AM
To: Legislative Services email LegislativeServices@victoria.ca

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: January 10, 2026 5:03 AM
To: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Subject: Budget

Until you have public safety and the unhoused off the streets you do not have a Victoria worth doing/spending on.

Forget about improving small sites for millions of dollars. Look at the bigger picture.

Victoria, BC
Sent from my iPhone

From: Engagement-External engage@victoria.ca
Subject: FW: Have You Heard Newsletter - January 2026
Date: January 14, 2026 at 9:04 AM
To: Legislative Services email LegislativeServices@victoria.ca

From:
Sent: January 13, 2026 8:51 PM
To: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Subject: Re: Have You Heard Newsletter - January 2026

Sent from my iPad

On Jan 13, 2026, at 10:19 AM, City of Victoria <engage@victoria.ca> wrote:

To Whom it may concern,

Hi Everyone,

I would like to send my Objection to the Police Department, an Increased of 5. + % on Police Budget, on the following Reasons ,

1, The Money does Not Grow On The Tree,
#2, There are still a lot of people making below \$ 20. Per Hour, the Spending Costs far exceed than the income, Lucky to have a Job, No way to make Ends Meet, the Increase of Budget is the Excuse for the Landlords to Increase the Rent,
#3,... You know the Better Screening of Poorer People Conditions,

And

#1, The Existing Police Remunerations are among the Top Ten pays Plus Holidays, Sick Leaves, Pensions , etc...

#2, The Police Pick and Choose The Works, for example,

a/ The Car's Body Damages and the Property's Damages are Less Cares, Unless Delivered by a Video Tapes, and then, Using the Excuse of Unreadable to Close the File,

B/. in their minds, Never have the Trajectories theory, or Every Road has Foot Prints, to Investigate the Issue, Talk to All Concerned People, and only Believe the Initiators and Closed the Files,

C/ on the other Hand, to Incense the Criminal to do the Crime, because, When the Police do Not Care, Who Cares ?,

#3, In the Years of Witness, I Hardly to See the Police's Work as Hard as others Working Classes, with the Ever Increasing Salaries, I Veto the 5.+% Increase.

Thanks for your attention.

Prefer in Writing. Thanks.

The latest on engagement opportunities and news from the City of Victoria. Read on for updates on current and past engagement projects.

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

2026 Draft Budget

Based on Council's initial budget deliberations, the City of Victoria's 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (2026 Draft Budget) has been updated and is now ready for public input.

Provide feedback in writing or by pre-recorded video by **January 23** to help inform Council's budget decisions.

A 5.42 per cent tax increase is currently proposed for the City's portion of the budget, investing \$384.1 million in operating costs and \$84.5 million in capital improvements to deliver more than 200 programs and services the community relies on. When combined with the police department's 5.02 per cent increase request, the total proposed tax increase is 10.44 per cent.

All public input will be shared with Council as they work to further reduce the City's portion of the tax increase.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Have Your Say About Sound and Noise

We're modernizing the 2003 Noise Bylaw, to make it easier to understand, follow and enforce.

Share your personal or business experiences to help inform an updated Noise Bylaw that balances livability and economic vibrancy in Victoria.

This bylaw sets standards to limit excessive noise from some activities, including construction, industry, hospitality, events and private waste collection. Complete the business or community survey before Jan. 31.

Additional engagement sessions are being held with businesses operating in Victoria.

[LEARN MORE](#)

PROJECT UPDATES

OCP Update Adopted

The Official Community Plan (OCP) for Victoria has been updated to meet the needs of our growing population and address the housing and climate crises. On October 2, 2025, Council adopted the new OCP: Victoria 2050 after a two-year planning process.

The OCP sets the vision and framework to balance growth with preservation and guide the City's work, decisions and actions over the next three decades. The citywide changes support housing solutions, climate action and complete communities that will shape Victoria through to 2050.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the engagement process. Your feedback shaped how Victoria will grow and change into the future.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Feedback Shaping the Future of the Gorge

Thank you to everyone who shared input on planning for sea level rise and coastal flooding in the Gorge and Portage Inlet. Engagement wrapped up on September 30, 2025.

Next, we're reviewing the feedback with our partner municipalities — Saanich, View Royal and Esquimalt — to help guide the development of the Gorge Coastal Flood Adaptation Strategy. Your feedback will help

shape adaptation options to protect homes, businesses, infrastructure and natural areas from flooding and rising sea levels.

We'll be back in the spring for a community workshop to continue the conversation.

The final strategy is expected in late 2026.

[LEARN MORE](#)

E-Bike Share Coming This Summer

Thank you for your suggestions for potential e-bike share parking zone locations. Engagement closed in late September and we're now using your feedback to plan and prioritize locations.

This summer, you'll be able to grab an e-bike, cruise to your destination and drop off your ride in the nearest bike share parking zone. Stay tuned for updates!

[LEARN MORE](#)

Major Street Upgrades coming to Cook, North Blanshard Street

Thank you to those who shared feedback and ideas during earlier engagement on transportation improvements across the city. Your input helped shape the designs now moving into construction on Cook St. (from Bay St. to Maplewood Rd.) and Blanshard St. (from Caledonia Ave. to Kings Rd.).

Updates include road paving, maintenance, protected bike lanes, new crosswalks, accessibility improvements and traffic signal and intersection safety upgrades.

Get updates by signing up for project newsletters at victoria.ca/signup.

Did you know the City of Victoria offers several newsletters?
[Click here to learn more.](#)

Follow us for news about future events



Questions? Contact us today: engage@victoria.ca
victoria.ca

Email sent to



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From: Engagement-External engage@victoria.ca
Subject: FW: Property Tax Increase for 2026
Date: January 7, 2026 at 7:56 AM
To: Legislative Services email LegislativeServices@victoria.ca

From:
Sent: January 7, 2026 12:19 AM
To: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Subject: Property Tax Increase for 2026

I have a deep concern about the ever-increasing annual property taxes. There is definitely something wrong when you have to increase taxes by 10% when incomes are not increasing at the same rate.

I am a retired homeowner with limited financial means. I am on a fixed income and with every tax and goods and services increase, I find myself getting further and further behind economically. If this practice continues, I will be priced out of my home with little or no means of finding affordable accommodation. I'm sure I'm not the only one feeling this pinch.

Surely, there is a better way of dealing with City needs. Even though safety and security are important services, these costs shouldn't take up the majority of the City's budget. This is nonsensical and unsustainable.

Property values are out of control and if they continue to escalate at 10%/year, no average person will be able to purchase or keep a home. As you know this is what is actually happening now and has been for quite some time, thus creating huge problems for the citizens of Victoria. In my view, property taxes need to be assessed differently. Maybe the City could factor in total household income as a means of determining tax exemptions as well as including some credits for housing numbers of people, which takes the load off the housing crisis?. This would certainly be a fairer system. There has to be a more practical solution to this problem!

I vote "NO" to tax increases for 2026.

Thank you for listening!

Victoria, BC

From: Engagement-External engage@victoria.ca
Subject: FW: Proposed tax increase
Date: December 16, 2025 at 8:55 AM
To: Legislative Services email LegislativeServices@victoria.ca

From:
Sent: December 16, 2025 6:27 AM
To: Engagement-External <engage@victoria.ca>
Subject: Proposed tax increase

Hi,

I'm writing to offer my feedback that a 10% property tax increase is far too high. People are struggling to make ends meet and pay bills -- even property owners. I am a new property owner and the majority of my money goes to housing costs and bills and food monthly. More taxes is not what we need. The police budget is constantly increasing every year and is far too high. I believe they have a 1 million PR budget for example. I am sure you can find savings somewhere in your budget and limit the property tax increase to much much lower. People don't need higher taxes every year. People need affordability. Please find savings and avoid raising taxes.

Thank you,

From:
Subject: Fwd: 2026 Budget: Do not increase police funding
Date: January 18, 2026 at 5:18 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Begin forwarded message:

From:
Subject: 2026 Budget: Do not increase police funding
Date: January 18, 2026 at 5:16:56 PM PST
To: legislativeservicees@victoria.ca, mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor Alto and Councillors:

I am writing to register my strong objection to any increase in the 2026 Victoria police budget.

The crisis of the dehousing, addiction and street crime has obviously not been solved by policing. Let's stop repeating the same mistakes over and over again.

The criminalization of poverty, and beating people up and confiscating their meagre personal effects is a waste of money, and only serves police (or Bylaw) vanity.

Rather than funding more policing, municipal money is needed for social services and decent housing. That includes tiny homes, supervised consumption sites, mental health care, staffed public washrooms, libraries, childcare, public transit, and safe bike lanes. (On the matter of bike lanes, I happily give Victoria stellar marks. Thank you!)

I agree with comments submitted by another writer: *I am so impressed with the collaboration between the City and Peer2Peer Indigenous Society to help unhoused individuals return to their homes and their communities. I can only imagine what other incredible (and practical) services the City of Victoria might invest in with that proposed 5.02% increase for Vic PD!*

Please do not waste our tax dollars on more policing — and therefore more bullying, bossing, and brutal "removal" of the city's most vulnerable citizens. Poverty is not a law enforcement matter.

Yours truly

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Fwd: Deny the police department budget increase
Date: January 8, 2026 at 12:32 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

I would like to submit the following email as feedback on the 2026 Draft Financial Plan.

I strongly urge you to reject the Victoria Police Department's proposed budget increase (including the proposal to hire additional officers) and invest that much-needed money in community services that will make Victoria a safer and more equitable place to live.

Thank you,

Begin forwarded message:

From:
Date: November 6, 2025 at 10:22:10 PM PST
To: councillors@victoria.ca
Subject: Deny the police department budget increase

Dear city councillors,

I'm writing to strongly encourage you to reject the Victoria Police Department's requested budget increase for 2026. The additional funding and officers are not necessary in a city where investment in community programs, support for low income residents, and public housing could make a bigger difference in safety and wellbeing.

The budget cuts that you are considering in order to allocate additional funds to VicPD are unconscionable. It's already the most expensive police department in BC per capita. Tell them to put their existing massive budget to better use. VicPD is racist, violent, and use excessive force against marginalized people and people experiencing mental health crises. Don't reward their bad behaviour with more money.

Our community needs public library hours, bike infrastructure, climate action, EV charging stations, and so many other measures that actually make Victoria a better place to live.

Stop caving to the police department when you're the ones in charge.

From:

Subject: I opposed the proposed increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget

Date: January 23, 2026 at 11:26 AM

To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers.

I want to see investment in people and community well-being - housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in an expanded the police force which targets our most vulnerable community members. I believe that strong, supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From:
Subject: I strongly oppose the increase to the police budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:08 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Cook St. I am vehemently opposed to the proposed 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a longtime resident, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go toward housing, improved funding for social programs, and our dwindling arts and culture scene, not hiring more police officers, because I know that community is what keeps us safe, not cops.

I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs. I speak from firsthand experience that the bylaw and police officers are poorly trained and cruel to those who have been failed by our society.

I am further appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. By prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live. People move here for the arts, NOT the police.

I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming, and the removal of the DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED school board that was required to support this foolish move should curdle in your guts as it does in mine.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who voted for many of you, and will vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Increase to poicing budget
Date: January 11, 2026 at 10:52 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I'm writing to you today to express my concern regarding the proposed increase of 5.02% increase in the VicPD budget.

In my opinion, this money could be better spent addressing the base needs of our community, especially the most vulnerable who live in and around Our Place, a hub and helping hand to the unhoused.

Sending police to dismantle and confiscate the makeshift shelters of these individuals is simply put, inhumane and a colossal waste of time, money, and energy, not only for those officers but for the unhoused. I just don't understand the reasoning.

So, if you're needing more police to reduce crime, actual crime in our city, stop sending officers to do the work of dismantling makeshift shelters and deploy them to the work of policing.

That should save you the 5.02% you think you need.

Say no to this increase of police funding.

Sincerely,

Victoria

From:
Subject: Increase to the Victoria Police budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 11:38 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is . I am a Victoria resident living on Pandora x Chambers st, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities especially towards vulnerable populations of people.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being - housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and hope you DEEPLY consider.

Pandora St, City of Victoria Resident

Sent from my Bell Samsung device over Canada's largest network.

From:
Subject: input on 2026 Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 11:04 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Quadra Street.

I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As an artist, I am appalled by the decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to Vic PD. Victoria is already a difficult place to make a living as an artist, and these cuts will make it harder for young artists like myself to find community, opportunities, and will make this city a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. Police cause harm. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Quadra St., Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Input He: Victoria's Draft Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 11:36 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor Alto and Council,

My name is _____ and I am a law student and creative writer who has lived in Victoria for the vast majority of my life. I am writing today to provide feedback about the City's 2026 draft budget. I am strongly opposed to the City's proposed increases to the Victoria Police Department's budget and the City's proposed funding cuts, particularly the proposed cuts to Arts, Culture, and Events and Climate Action.

As a law student who has spent the last three years studying and working in the realm of environmental law, I am frankly appalled by the proposed cut of 10% to Climate Action. Experts are [already warning that Victoria is set to face another of the hottest years](#) in our City's history. Now is the time to invest in mitigation and adaptation measures to make this city livable for now and for the future. I want to raise my children here, in a city that is capable of withstanding the brutal realities we have already begun to face—extreme heat, drought, flooding events. Climate change is not going away. The City needs to act now to protect those who are most vulnerable, such as the elderly and the unsheltered population. Again, we should be investing *more* in Climate Action, not less.

As someone who grew up in Victoria and has been involved in the local theatre community here for over 15 years, I am acutely aware of how challenging it is for artists to make a living in this city—particularly artists who rely on affordable and accessible performance spaces to do their work, of which there are fewer and fewer. The proposed funding cut of 18% to Arts, Culture, and Events will make it even more difficult for artists to survive and thrive in this city. We should be investing more in arts and culture in Victoria, not less, and certainly not almost 20% less.

It is completely unjustifiable for the City to propose a 14% increase to operating spending for the Victoria Police Department while slashing Arts, Culture, and Events funding, Climate Action funding, Citywide Planning funding, and more. The Victoria Police Department is not the solution to making the City safer and more livable. Importantly, police and bylaw officers simply exacerbate the trauma that unsheltered people already experience on a day-to-day basis; they do not address the root causes of homelessness and crime. We should be investing in more innovative projects like the Peer Assisted Crisis Team that Victoria piloted in 2021—robust alternatives to policing that actually address the needs of people living on the streets, such as trauma-informed mental health care, a safe place to sleep, and a safer supply of drugs.

I am deeply invested in the health of our City. I care about public safety, particularly for the most vulnerable members of our community. But increasing the Victoria Police Department's budget is not the answer. Please, invest our City's resources into programs and projects that have been proven to bring about positive results: community grants, tenant assistance and housing programs, affordable arts spaces, special education supports, alternatives to policing, climate mitigation and adaptation measures. These are the kinds of programs and projects that will make sure Victoria is a safe, welcoming, and vibrant place to live.

As someone who voted in the last municipal election and plans to vote again this year, I have been and will continue to pay close attention to the decisions the City makes in the coming weeks and months.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: Letter of Opposition - Victoria PD Draft Budget
Date: January 20, 2026 at 1:46 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

my name is . I am a Victoria resident, currently residing in the Oak Bay area. The purpose of this letter is to state my opposition for the proposed 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the council's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, While VicPD is receiving an incredibly large increase. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist. The city has already lost so many of its beloved venues and arts spaces, such as Victoria Events Centre along with many more, as a result of a decrease in public funding. The Arts are fundamental to empowering the youth and community of Victoria. By prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that are proven to make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for people moving and living in the city to find community, and, without them, I, along with many residents in the city of Victoria, will be displaced.

Many people, including myself, are concerned about public safety in Victoria for good reason. More police, however, is not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs and arts programs that empower Victoria's residents. It is crucial to direct time and effort towards resources that foster growth instead of fighting it. As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close

attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Mail Attachment
Date: December 13, 2025 at 7:09 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good morning,

I am writing to ask you to not give Victoria Police Department the raise they are requesting this year, and instead invest more money into the following areas:

Community supports such as more housing, and more funding for services such as Cool Aid. Homelessness is a large problem in Victoria, and it is important to realize that the solution to this problem isn't policing. Confiscating someone's tent and belongings doesn't stop them from being homeless - it just makes them even less likely to find housing.

Traffic calming measures. Victoria is experiencing an alarming rate of traffic violence. I have visual and physical limitations that make driving a bad idea, and though the protected bike lanes have made my commute much safer, I still experience near misses almost daily, as distracted drivers are very common. It would be great if we could adopt more measures to bring us closer to Vision Zero. More lighting at crosswalks, more bump outs. The ballooning Victoria police budget over the past decade has not led to any decrease in traffic violence, so it's important to look at measures that have worked in other cities.

Finally, we need more community events. We have long been a tourist destination but we won't be if we spend all our money on policing. No one goes to visit a city to see the cops (except perhaps Buckingham Palace), and an overly large police presence tends to make people uneasy. We need more money spent on art installations, on music events, on races, on public docks, on parks, on community days.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From:
Subject: My opposition
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:17 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ I am a Victoria resident living on Blanshard street, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities especially towards vulnerable populations of people.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being - housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Blanshard street , City of Victoria Resident

Obtenir [Outlook pour Android](#)

From:
Subject: No to increase police budget
Date: January 22, 2026 at 2:47 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Michigan st. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs like harm reduction, affordable housing.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Victoria

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From:
Subject: Objection to 2026 Property Tax Increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 6:58 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I am writing to strongly object to the proposed property tax increase in the City of Victoria's 2026 Draft Budget and 2026–2030 Draft Financial Plan.

One of the most troubling aspects of this proposal is that **my property's assessed value has declined** this year, yet I am being asked to pay *more in taxes*. This disconnect between declining property value and an increasing tax burden is unfair and places unnecessary financial strain on homeowners already facing high costs of living.

The current draft would result in a **total proposed tax increase of about 10.44 %** (5.42 % for the City's portion and 5.02 % for the Victoria Police budget), which is significantly higher than inflation and far beyond what most residents can reasonably absorb.

These increases are driven largely by overall budget growth — including large police budget increases — rather than measurable improvements in services. Public discussions show that residents and even some councillors are pushing back on these high percentages and asking Council to find alternatives, such as cutting or deferring non-essential programs.

Additionally, the draft budget implies *major revisions will be needed* to get the property tax increase down to a more manageable level, with Council staff estimating that tens of millions of dollars in cuts or other revenue options would be required to reach a 4 % tax increase goal.

Because of this, I urge Council to:

- **Rethink the size of the tax increase** and aim for a rate that reflects real household affordability, not just City spending ambitions.
- **Reevaluate budget priorities**, especially high-growth areas like policing expenditures that contribute heavily to the overall increase.
- **Explore stronger cost controls and service efficiencies** before placing the burden on homeowners whose property values have gone down.

Thank you for considering my perspective as part of the public input process.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: Oppose 10% tax hike
Date: January 7, 2026 at 10:15 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

We strongly oppose a 10% property tax increase in Victoria. Residents are already under significant financial pressure from the ongoing rise in food prices, utilities, and other essential living costs. On top of this, the City has increased property taxes year after year, leaving many homeowners stretched thin.

With so much economic uncertainty, this is not the time to impose another large tax hike. Households need to keep their powder dry, control spending, and plan carefully—and the City should be doing the same such as delay the Crystal Pool project.

Unfortunately, the City has wasted a substantial amount of public money on projects that deliver little value, particularly bike lanes all around the city that are rarely used. Living in James Bay, I see firsthand that the bike lane on Government Street is largely unused and has instead created confusion and congestion for pedestrians and drivers.

The City must stop wasting taxpayers' money and focus on responsible budgeting, essential services, and affordability for residents.

Residents of James Bay

From:
Subject: Oppose VicPD Budget Increase - Build Stronger Communities
Date: January 20, 2026 at 10:24 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor and Council,

Hello, my name is _____, and I am a Victoria resident.

I am opposed to the proposed 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 additional officers.

VicPD already receives a substantial portion of the City's operating budget. Continued increases at this scale raise serious concerns, particularly when many of the root causes of harm in our city remain under-addressed. Public safety is not created solely through enforcement; it is built when people are supported, connected, and meaningfully engaged in their communities.

Many police calls stem from issues that are not criminal in nature, including mental health crises, substance use, housing insecurity, and social isolation. While increased funding for community supports such as mental health care, housing, youth services, and addiction supports is essential, these efforts must be paired with intentional investment in community-building itself.

Through my own participation in community-building and neighbourhood engagement initiatives in Victoria, I have seen firsthand how powerful it is when people are given the tools, spaces, and encouragement to connect locally. When residents know one another, feel a sense of belonging, and have opportunities to participate, communities become more resilient and safer, often preventing crises before they occur.

Investment in community-building includes:

- Accessible and welcoming spaces for people to gather regularly
- Support for neighbourhood-level connection and local leadership
- Opportunities for residents to get involved in ways that match their capacity
- Infrastructure that reduces isolation and fosters trust and mutual care

These investments are relatively modest compared to policing costs, yet they produce long-term benefits that reduce strain on emergency services and enforcement systems. Strong communities do not replace police, but they significantly reduce the situations that require a police response in the first place.

If Council is serious about improving public safety in a sustainable and fiscally responsible way, it is critical to rebalance priorities away from continued expansion of policing and toward prevention, care, and connection. This includes rejecting the proposed 14% increase and investing in community supports and community-building infrastructure across the city.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Opposed to increase in police funding
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:52 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Caledonia Ave. I am strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers. More funding for police is **absolutely not** the solution to this city's problems.

As a renter, I urge our Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make renting possible in this city while the cost of living continues to rise.

As a person with lived experience of mental health challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge our Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

15 year resident of Victoria

From:
Subject: Opposed to police budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:02 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is . I am a Victoria resident, residing on Newton Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with experience supporting people experiencing homelessness in retrieving belongings impounded by bylaw, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Opposing Police budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 9:51 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is . I am a Victoria resident living on Kings Rd and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities particularly evidenced by their lack of care and blatantly violent treatment towards vulnerable populations of people such as those who are unhoused.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being such as housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, connected, and supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Opposition of Vic PD budgeting plan 2026-2030
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:56 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Topaz Ave. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived/living experience of homelessness, mental health, or substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use dru

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Topaz Ave, City of Victoria resident

From:
Subject: Opposition to 2026 City budget draft
Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:03 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there,

My name is _____ and I live at _____. I am opposed to the proposed 14% increase in the budget of the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of more officers. VicPD already costs more per capita than BC's other municipal police departments and RCMP units. This is crazy and unnecessary.

As a UVic student who has many artist friends and who is engaged in the music, drag, and other art scenes here in Victoria, I am disheartened at the amount of live performance venues that have closed in the past few years, be it the Victoria Event Centre, the Carlton in Esquimalt, or most recently the Metro Studio Theatre. Arts and culture events are what make a city, a city. They are what tourists want to go do, like during the Fringe Festival. Supplementing venues like theses' income so they stay open is what the city budget should go to, not more over policing.

I also noticed a slight decrease in funding for the public library when I looked at the draft budget. Libraries like the one downtown being open and welcoming spaces is what builds community and keeps people off the streets. I have a friend who used to live in Calgary, and I am jealous of all the things he said their library had for rent like 3-D printers. Rasing the budget for the libraries, not the police, to give people access to more books and various equipment would make the City of Victoria look like it really cares about the joy of its citizens.

Finally, as a renter in here in downtown, I believe that the raise in the police budget would be better allocated to affordable housing programs, community grants, neighborhood housing, and tennant assistance: the kinds of programs that actually get people off the street and into safety instead of terrorizing them.

As someone who will continue to vote in municipal ellections, I will be paying attention to your decisions about this budget.

Thank you for your time,

From:
Subject: Opposition to Police Budget Increase
Date: January 8, 2026 at 9:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am a Fernwood resident, and am writing to express opposition to the 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department.

I have reviewed documentation for this budget that is light years beyond inflation. The city needs to increase scrutiny and request breakdowns for these lump sum expenses for entire departments, to allow for more detailed reasoning behind the need for such massive increases rather than these broad strokes.

When reviewing their list of "Efficiencies Planned and Implemented" it reads as a list of new initiatives that likely required plenty of new equipment, technology, training and logistics to launch rather than evidence of attempts for cost savings.

But I feel even more strongly that as a parent of children in the public school system, we are faced with tough decisions about where to cut all seemingly essential services every year because there is not an endless supply of funding from the province. It's time the police department received the same message and learned to be actually efficient with their funding.

Thank you,

Victoria

From:
Subject: Opposition to VicPD budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 8:14 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ I am a Victoria resident, residing on Gorge Road East. I am strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

I've lived here for 13 years and I am appalled and disappointed by the city's budgeting decisions. To cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD, is a direct blow to those of us who make up Victoria's lifeblood, and who make Victoria the interesting place that it is to live. Victoria is already a very challenging place to afford as a young person, never mind an artist, and by prioritizing the police in next year's budget this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a long term renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer and a realistic place to live, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere. How can it be acceptable to make decisions that push the people who keep this city moving and running further and further out, until we have to leave Victoria or possibly the island itself? The areas that are seen as interesting and vibrant are created by people like me.

I am also deeply concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are worried about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. It has been proven that, when navigating substance issues and interactions with the unhoused and at-risk community, more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs!

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria resident)

From:
Subject: Please Head
Date: January 19, 2026 at 10:25 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is . I am a Victoria resident living on Inskip Street, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities especially towards vulnerable populations of people.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being—housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Inskip Street, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Please reconsider Victoria Police's 2026 Draft Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 12:41 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear City of Victoria Engagement Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer input on the city's 2026-2030 Draft Budget.

Having read through the drafts, I would like to ask City Council to reconsider the Victoria Police's draft budget. There seems to be a disproportionate amount of funding for the police that could otherwise be used in community or social services that keep people safe and make this city a good place to live.

I live in the Jubilee area, and a few months ago a deer came into and collapsed in our back yard with a significant injury to its leg. The conservation office was called and said they would do their best to come out, but must have been too busy/under capacity as they did not. The next day we came home to find that the deer had stumbled into the neighbour's front garden and got tangled in their Christmas lights. Three police officers were there, using large planks of wood to push and try to get the deer to stand up - perhaps not realizing it was injured. It was a harrowing and chaotic scene. The deer was clearly very confused, stressed, and scared. After a long time of attempting to help they alerted ourselves and other neighbours that they were going to shoot the deer with their gun. They shot it twice. We heard them confused as to whether or not the deer was dead. They then left one officer to stand guard for perhaps an hour while waiting for the deer to be collected.

I'm sharing this story because I have no doubt that the three police officers were doing their best given the situation - but it is confusing to me that the conservation office did not have enough time/capacity to deal with a situation that they are trained in, and at the same time there was enough money and time for three police officers to attend a situation they they did not seem trained in at all, for many hours.

If this is the chaotic and stressful end of a deer's life, I can only imagine the difficulties faced by those requiring a type of support that the police are not trained to provide. The only way for trained support to be provided in difficult situations is when the qualified organizations receive enough funding to do so. With this, please reconsider the disproportionate amount of funding provided to the police - who are not trained or able to help in every situation.

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts.

Kind regards,

Victoria, BC,

From:
Subject: Police budget increase
Date: January 13, 2026 at 1:45 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good morning representative, I write this letter to kindly and clearly ask for a better redirecting of the city's resources. The increase of police presence alone will not deter homelessness and addiction which are rising, affecting our community both silently and actively. I ask of you to please focus on the real issue and provide mental health help for the population. Please redirect this funds and place them in an area that is needed way more and will actually help prevent and reframe the mental health issue that's plaguing this city and country. PLEASE, BE BETTER THAN AMERICA.

With respect,

Victoria resident.

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From:
Subject: police budget
Date: January 10, 2026 at 5:50 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am a resident of the city of Victoria. I am appalled by the proposal to increase the VicPD budget for this year. What a waste of tax payers dollars that could go to funding community services that actually address the problems in our community.

People deserve accessible support that meets them where they're at.

From:
Subject: Police funding
Date: January 19, 2026 at 11:53 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I oppose funding more cops when so many other services in Victoria have a shortfall.

I especially find it insane that we keep funding police who seem to do zero traffic enforcement and insist it is not their job. Yet we have so many pedestrians and cyclists being struck by inattentive drivers.

Instead of increasing cop funding, let's use technology to enforce traffic and then use fines raised as police funding.

But throwing money at these cops who keep finding more reasons to spend it is just not working. So much of Pandora, etc, is a mental health situation, and cops aren't solving that, so why are they being funding for it?

I understand it's a complicated matter and I respect that current drugs are not the old coke/weed enforcement scenario of my youth and so much more is at stake, but at the same time, driving is becoming more dangerous more frequently, and we never, ever enforce it.

How do the police get to decide what they enforce, and how is that beneficial to people like me, who moved here for the most walkable city in the country, yet who finds walking more and more dangerous because of inattentive drivers in vehicles that are large enough to do serious damage no matter what speed they hit me at?

Red light cameras and speed traps may piss off some drivers, but with more cyclists and pedestrians than ever, the public sentiment IS NOT WHAT IT WAS under Glen Clark and council needs to get tough on drivers.

I would especially like to see more roadblocks at night when it seems like it's always people from the burbs coming into OUR town to drink and drive, putting us at risk.

Regards,

From:
Subject: Property Tax Hike
Date: January 6, 2026 at 6:53 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello There

Victoria businesses are struggling. Property tax hike directly affects the businesses as the cost is transferred from Landlord to the businesses.

City should be focused on cutting down the spending rather than increasing the tax hike.

We don't support this.

Thanks

From:
Subject: Property tax increase - 2026 Budget - Comment
Date: January 7, 2026 at 8:27 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Respectfully, after striking for three months, BC public servants only received a 3% wage increase. As a young homeowner how am I expected to keep up with property tax increases like those proposed with the 2025 budget while my buying power simply cannot match the pace?

Please reconsider the value of keeping Downtown living affordable for the young people that grew up here and want to stay, who keep it vibrant.

Thank you.

From:
Subject: Property Tax Increase
Date: January 20, 2026 at 4:05 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Dear Sir/Madam

Please let this email serve as a vote against the cities proposed 10.4 percent combined property tax hike.

The tax hike is astronomically high and unreasonable. As a landlord, this will be passed on to my tenants causing more inflation and unaffordability. Since 2023, the city of Victoria property taxes (with the proposed rate) will have increased by 26% with no end in sight. What will happen when the pool is added in. This increase smacks of hypocrisy with the City actively campaigns for working and lower income citizens, however when property tax hikes hit, these same people are forced to sell or move to cheaper neighbourhoods. Is the objective designed to force out fixed income and working Canadians to bring in higher income earners? How is this serving Victoria?

As a measure against other municipalities, (and value for taxes paid), Toronto property taxes have gone up 19% over the same period with much more expanded services.

I ask the City to live within a reasonable budget and increase property taxes with the rate of inflation.

Best

Victoria, BC

From: Daniel Bar-Dayan Daniel@porte.ca
Subject: proposal for the 2026 budget - save the office market
Date: January 12, 2026 at 11:54 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc: Jeff Bray jeff@downtownvictoria.ca

Hi,

There need to be funds allocated to educating and lobbying the provincial government on reversing their work from home policy. The BC government is pushing for more work from home when they should be doing the opposite like other provinces and private business are. This is a serious problem that is going to ruin the office market in Victoria, notably downtown. It's going to lead to vacant office buildings but also retail space in mixed use buildings where foot traffic slows down dramatically. This will lead to more vagrants hanging around vacant spaces and all this will have a negative effect on tourism.

This is a serious problem which the DVBA and city need to invest more time and resources into immediately.

Regards,

Daniel Bar-Dayan

Executive Vice President



Porte Communities

T 604.732.7651 ext. 103

www.porte.ca | daniel@porte.ca

From: Brad Ostermann bostermann@kiavictoria.ca
Subject: Proposed 10% Tax increase
Date: January 13, 2026 at 4:52 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I would just like you to know that your proposed 10% tax increase will equate to almost \$20,000 to my local business. In the last 6 years, our property tax has almost doubled from \$114,000 to now more than \$210,000. We are a relatively small business and these increases have been crippling. We are now at the point where doing business in Victoria doesn't make sense. Imagine your personal household expenses increasing by 100% in 6 years.

Wanting to spend more money and hire more staff isn't a good enough reason to raise taxes.

If you want to spend more you need to save and cut and find the money.

Audit your staffing. I guarantee you could cut 10% of staff tomorrow and no services would be affected. Remove flex days and bring your staff back to the office. They are not efficient!

Audit your contracts. Your trades are killing you. A city contract is justification for a 50% bump and it should mean sharpening the pencil.

Start treating the city like a business or you wont have any business left in your city!

Brad Ostermann



2620 Government St

Victoria BC

V8T 4P8

250-360-1111

From:
Subject: Proposed 2026 City Budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 7:40 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Mayor and Council are on their way to failing once again to hold property taxes to a reasonable level, which should be below the cost of living. Just look at what Port Coquitlam have done in keeping their property taxes below 2%. This Mayor and Council, with the exception of a few councilors who are on the more conservative end of the spending spectrum, continue to blame everything and everyone but themselves when looking at setting a reasonable rate for property tax increases, which should be below 2%. They have a responsibility to tax payers to walk through each line of the budget to see where savings can be achieved and options for reducing costs. For example, the number of City staff and salaries continue to grow at an unacceptable rate, funding for the housing crisis which is not a municipal issue, unacceptable increases for policing and firefighting, and the list goes on. Don't get me wrong, I'm extremely supportive and appreciative of our policing services and firefighters but just because Vic PD ask for a 5% increase doesn't mean they should get it. They also have a responsibility to look at each budget item and look for savings and options for reducing costs.

Having over 13 municipalities that serve a population of 400,000 people is absolutely ridiculous. The savings that would be realized by cutting that number in half would be significant and would likely result in a property tax reduction. Unfortunately, municipalities are not going to take action to eliminate their kingdoms. That falls to the Provincial Government who never want to get their hands dirty, so here we are with property taxes continuing to go up by at least 10% every year.

I'm so glad there's another municipal election this year, and the only thing I can hope for is a new Mayor and Council that actually understand property owners are not bottomless pits of money, something the current Mayor and Council don't seem to understand and really don't care.

From:
Subject: Proposed 2026 City of Victoria budget & related property tax increase
Date: January 14, 2026 at 12:10 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To: Mayor and city council, City of Victoria:

The proposed property tax increase of 10.44% is absolutely ridiculous and totally unnecessary. This is just another example of the outrageous irresponsibility of our mayor and certain members of our current council commonly referred to as the “gang of five”. Many property owners simply cannot afford such a large increase. In fact, it is quite possible to reduce the increase to 0, as is the City of Vancouver, or at least to keep it down to the overall level of inflation. Perhaps eliminating all the grants or handouts to multiple organizations favoured by some council members, in keeping with their motto “hey, it’s not our money”. If Council goes ahead with this or any other increase exceeding inflation, no doubt the voters will make their opinions known at the next election.

From:
Subject: Proposed Budget. 2026
Date: January 14, 2026 at 12:49 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello

My suggestion is to work within the amount of last years budget (no increase at all)

Cut back on non-core projects. Freeze hiring , use attrition to down size staff. Stick to basic core projects of running a city.

Existing policy and governing has driven people to avoid coming downtown

Do not give elected people a raise, unbelievable someone applies/elected to do a job, gets the job ,and then says It is to much work (and they need more money) ! My answer to that is do not run again.

Thanks.

From:
Subject: Proposed increase in police budget
Date: January 13, 2026 at 9:52 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Esteemed Mayor and Council,

My name is _____ and I have lived in Victoria since 1989. I have seen many changes since then. Victoria has grown exponentially and, once again, I have been seeing the downtown area deteriorate and I don't believe that your proposal of increasing the police budget is helpful.

Like you (and absolutely everyone), I have watched our downtown core become a gathering place for those who have been neglected and abused by our increasingly inequitable society. Since the nineties I have seen governments at all levels reducing their responsibilities to our most vulnerable citizens. This worsened during COVID and we now see homelessness and addiction in most of our city centres. We see people desperately trying to survive by living in shabby tents which have to be packed up every morning with no place for this community to shelter. We see members of this community in store entrances and anywhere that they can seek some form of shelter from the elements. The misery of this community—who are also members and citizens of our communities!—is in our faces every day. It keeps me awake at night as I lie in my bed in my safe, dry home. It is not right. It is shameful that people have to live like this in what is a fairly affluent city.

People need affordable housing and social services. Not, as I read in Budget 2026, the proposed increase for police services. We know that police enforcement does not work. What we also know for certain is that social services and affordable housing goes a long way to solving this human crisis. We need to look at ways to reduce and hopefully prevent this human crisis, not police it. There are countries who have found ways to drastically mitigate this problem by offering housing and social services first; eg. Finland.

In addition, this makes the downtown core a difficult place for businesses to thrive. We see many of them closing. It also affects how tourists see our city—I, myself, have no desire to show our once beautiful city to friends who are visiting from elsewhere.

For the above reasons, I am asking you to please take a deep dive into the success rate of having thrown vast amounts of cash at the police department over the past decade or so. The police are not equipped to address the root of the problem (they have admitted it themselves) which is where we need to start. I don't believe that increases in police spending is solving the multi-crises of poverty and addiction. It hasn't made our city safer or pleasant for anyone. I don't think that this is tax dollars well spent.

We need to invest that money in community services. in tiny home villages. in

... need to invest that money, in community services, in drug needle exchanges, in supervised consumption sites and dignified shelter.

In the words of a friend of mine: We all want to 'clean up' our streets, make our city safer, and not have to look at the reality of a broken society. Policing has never been the answer, and won't be the answer no matter how many tax dollars we throw at it. We need real services and affordable housing for our most vulnerable neighbours. "We rise by lifting others". So, for the love of everything we cherish about our beautiful city, please do NOT waste my taxes on increasing the police budget!

Again, I hope you give this matter your serious and thoughtful consideration.

I hope to see a change in this budget,

Thank you,

VICTORIA

From:

Subject: Proposed increase of VicPD budget

Date: January 8, 2026 at 3:54 PM

To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Montreal street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

1. As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

2. As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

3. As a person that works with those experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs. As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months. Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Proposed Victoria police budget
Date: January 11, 2026 at 8:26 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good evening,

I live on Hereward Road and I am writing to ask you to please reject the proposed budget increase for the police.

I have MS and though I am thankfully able to work a full time job, I take many sick days because I unfortunately have days I cannot work. I cannot afford this kind of property tax increase. It is absurd.

Victoria already has the highest paid police per capita in BC. They do not need any more money - they need a lesson in budgeting.

Colwood opened a medical clinic for its citizens. This is what Victoria needs. We need healthcare, not more police.

If budget increases for the police were going to solve any problems, they would have done so already.

They have had so much of our money, and what do they have to show for it? A bungled drug bust that cost us millions. When do they pay us back for that? Imagine if you or I lost millions of dollars due to corruption at our jobs. Would we get a raise? No, we would get fired, as we rightly should.

Please do not approve this increase. No one can afford this.

Thank you,

From: (null)
Subject: RE: 2026 Draft Budget Feedback
Date: January 23, 2026 at 8:53 AM
To:

From:
Sent: January 23, 2026 8:51 AM
To: Legislative Services email <LegislativeServices@victoria.ca>
Subject: 2026 Draft Budget Feedback

Dear City Councillors,

I'm writing to oppose VicPD's draft 2026 budget. VicPD receives a disproportionate amount of municipal funding at the expense of community and social services that keep people safe.

Please reject the proposed 2026 budget increase for VicPD, including the hiring of 25 new officers. I would also encourage you to look for opportunities to reduce the existing police budget to further invest in community supports and services.

In solidarity,

I live within the territory of the Lək'wəŋən peoples, the Songhees and Xwsepsum Nations. I believe in Land Back and am committed to learning how to be a responsible and honourable guest on these lands.

From:
Subject: He: budget draft and police budget increase proposal
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:49 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, currently residing in Saanich.
I am writing this letter to state that am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I will be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person who works with people experiencing homelessness/precariously housed, people with mental health, and/or substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. They continue to remove people belongings and displace them further away from the services available.

We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe and supervised places to use drugs. I witnessed police brutality when dealing with people in mental health crisis and can't attest that police doesn't make our community safe but affordable/subsidized/supporting housing with focus on mental health supports does!

Furthermore, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming. Keep police out of schools!

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. And, I also know that more police on the streets of Victoria is not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop turning Victoria into a cop city and to reinvesting into Victoria community, Victoria art programs and Victoria housing.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

I appreciate the time and consideration.

Victoria BC

From:
Subject: RE: Budget Increase for VicPD
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi there.

I am contacting your offices to voice my opposition to the proposed budget increase for Victoria's police department. As a person who has been a citizen of this place for over 25 years, I have seen this city through many years of change. Even though we are experiencing some great challenges with our unhoused population, it is no excuse to raise a budget for a police department which already has the highest per capita spend in the whole province.

We do not need more enforcement. We need to be using city funds to support more mental health services and access to healthcare. To support housing infrastructure and invest in education and career services for folks. The path towards further police enforcement and militarization has been walked by countless cities in North America and abroad, with objectively poor consequences across the board. Rarely - if ever - does heavier policing reduce crime.

This also cuts into the city's budget for art and culture programming, grant programs, and neighbourhood associations. All things which serve to enrich the lives of citizens, which I would argue helps to keep people grounded and happy. These sorts of things - like community programs- tend to lead to reduced crime, especially for at-risk youth.

To me, this move feels like it's more about council's optics than protecting citizens. Which is a damn shame.

Please reconsider doing this. It would be a great disservice to the people of Victoria to raise the VicPD budget.

Thank you for reading,

From:
Subject: Re: Disapproval of 10.44% property tax increase
Date: January 12, 2026 at 3:55 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I forgot to include my address:

Victoria, BC

--
All the best,

On Mon, Jan 12, 2026 at 1:17 PM Tessa Davies wrote:

Enough is enough! No one can afford to live here anymore. Please find more creative ways to find money for municipal services and projects than taxing property owners who already can't afford anything as it is. I've seen so many home owners need to sell their properties who can no longer use Airbnb as well.

More budget cuts are required and no more unnecessary renovation projects! Put that money towards helping the unhoused with more treatment centres and mental health support. Thank you.

--
All the best,

From:
Subject: RE: Have You Heard Newsletter - January 2026
Date: January 22, 2026 at 8:46 AM
To: engage@victoria.ca, legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc:

Dear Madam Mayor and Councillors:

Thank you for offering us this chance to let you know what we're thinking.

- First, we **thank Councillors Marg Gardiner and Stephen Hammond** for their good work.
- Second, we are sad to say we will be working for the removal of the rest of you come the election in October. "Sad" because most people who devote themselves to public service should merit praise and goodwill. But (a) this budget (b) your OCP based virtually on no real public input, (c) your ill considered and abortive plans for your own salary increases and for the Sequoia removal, and (d) another unaffordable decision – the swimming pool, all clearly show that the rest of you are not fit to govern.
- Third, we think your budget is unaffordable. It raises spending by 6.16% at a time when the cost of living is only increasing by about 3%. To balance your budget, this spending increase of 6.16% must be offset by an unsustainable tax increase of nearly twice that amount – about 11.27% to be exact (see below).

Respectfully,

Victoria, BC

More about the Budget in case you're still reading:

- **CoV (City of Victoria) Needs a Property Tax Increase of 11.27% not 10.44% to Cover its Spending:** The CoV "Draft Financial Plan Updated December 2025" Page 3 Revenues (\$363.832M) minus Page 4 Expenditures (\$384.194) results in a deficit of \$20.362M after an increase in Property Taxes "Base" of \$1.445M. To balance this budget requires \$20.362M more taxes than that \$1.445 which is a year over year budget increase of \$21.807M (\$1.445+\$20.362) or 11.27% more than the budget base tax amount for 2025 (\$193.491M). This 11.27% does not agree with the 10.44% you offer in your introduction.
- **CoV Can't Seem to Manage Money:** When the cost of living increases about 3 or 4% how is it that CoV thinks it must increase spending by 6.16%. And then place more of the burden of that increase on Taxpayers, whose taxes will rise by an unsustainable 11.27%.
- **Your Math is Wrong:** CoV wrongly implies that a 10.44% increase in total taxes can be justified by: a 5.42% increase in proposed taxes to cover CoV spending for 2026 **plus** a 5.02% increase in proposed taxes to cover VicPD spending and that the sum of these (10.44%) means something. Wrong: Grade 5 math example: 5% of \$300M plus 5% of 100M gives you \$15M+5M i.e. \$20M - still only 5% of the total \$400M, not 10%. You should let your CFO check your math.

From: City of Victoria
Sent: January 13, 2026 10:36 AM
To:
Subject: Have You Heard Newsletter - January 2026



Have You Heard



The latest on engagement opportunities and news from the City of Victoria. Read on for updates on current and past engagement projects.

ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



2025 DRAFT BUDGET

Public Input Opportunity

2026 Draft Budget

Based on Council's initial budget deliberations, the City of Victoria's 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan (2026 Draft Budget) has been updated and is now ready for public input.

Provide feedback in writing or by pre-recorded video by **January 23** to help inform Council's budget decisions.

A 5.42 per cent tax increase is currently proposed for the City's portion of the budget, investing \$384.1 million in operating costs and \$84.5 million in capital improvements to deliver more than 200 programs and services the community relies on. When combined with the police department's 5.02 per cent increase request, the total proposed tax increase is 10.44 per cent.

All public input will be shared with Council as they work to further reduce the City's portion of the tax increase.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Let's Talk About the Noise Bylaw

Have Your Say About Sound and Noise

We're modernizing the 2003 Noise Bylaw, to make it easier to understand, follow and enforce.

Share your personal or business experiences to help inform an updated Noise Bylaw that balances livability and economic vibrancy in Victoria.

This bylaw sets standards to limit excessive noise from some activities, including construction, industry, hospitality, events and private waste collection. Complete the business or community survey before Jan. 31.

Additional engagement sessions are being held with businesses operating in Victoria.

[LEARN MORE](#)

PROJECT UPDATES



OCP Update Adopted

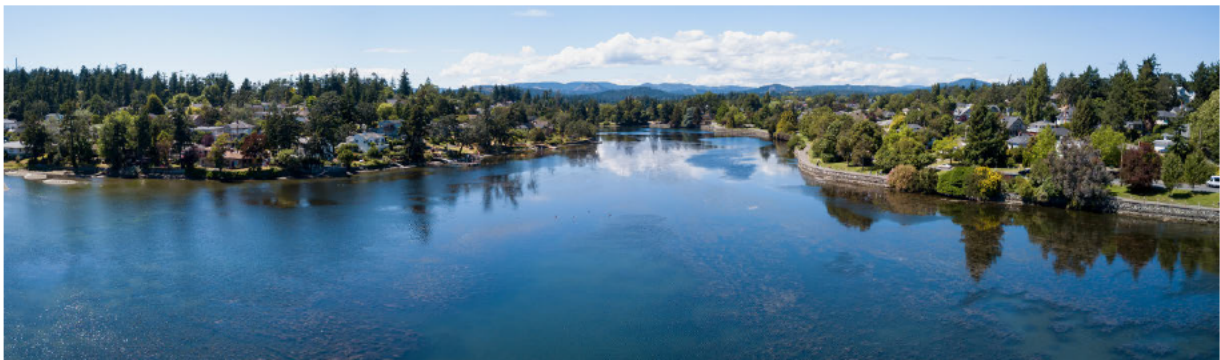
The Official Community Plan (OCP) for Victoria has been updated to meet the needs of our growing population and address the housing and climate crises. On October 2, 2025, Council adopted the new

population and address the housing and climate needs. On October 2, 2025, Council adopted the new OCP: Victoria 2050 after a two-year planning process.

The OCP sets the vision and framework to balance growth with preservation and guide the City's work, decisions and actions over the next three decades. The citywide changes support housing solutions, climate action and complete communities that will shape Victoria through to 2050.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the engagement process. Your feedback shaped how Victoria will grow and change into the future.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Feedback Shaping the Future of the Gorge

Thank you to everyone who shared input on planning for sea level rise and coastal flooding in the Gorge and Portage Inlet. Engagement wrapped up on September 30, 2025.

Next, we're reviewing the feedback with our partner municipalities — Saanich, View Royal and Esquimalt — to help guide the development of the Gorge Coastal Flood Adaptation Strategy. Your feedback will help shape adaptation options to protect homes, businesses, infrastructure and natural areas from flooding and rising sea levels.

We'll be back in the spring for a community workshop to continue the conversation.

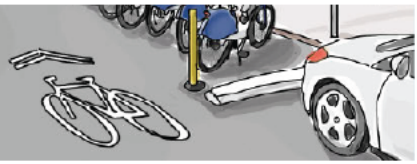
The final strategy is expected in late 2026.

[LEARN MORE](#)

**BIKE SHARE
PARKING ZONES**



PARKING ZONES



E-Bike Share Coming This Summer

Thank you for your suggestions for potential e-bike share parking zone locations. Engagement closed in late September and we're now using your feedback to plan and prioritize locations.

This summer, you'll be able to grab an e-bike, cruise to your destination and drop off your ride in the nearest bike share parking zone. Stay tuned for updates!

[LEARN MORE](#)



Major Street Upgrades coming to Cook, North Blanshard Street

Thank you to those who shared feedback and ideas during earlier engagement on transportation improvements across the city. Your input helped shape the designs now moving into construction on Cook St. (from Bay St. to Maplewood Rd.) and Blanshard St. (from Caledonia Ave. to Kings Rd.).

Updates include road paving, maintenance, protected bike lanes, new crosswalks, accessibility improvements and traffic signal and intersection safety upgrades.

Get updates by signing up for project newsletters at victoria.ca/signup.



Did you know the City of Victoria offers several newsletters?
[Click here to learn more.](#)



Follow us for news about future events



Questions? Contact us today: engage@victoria.ca
victoria.ca

Email sent to

City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, British Columbia | V8W 1P6 | Canada
engage@victoria.ca

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From:
Subject: Redistribute VPD funds
Date: January 21, 2026 at 1:02 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I'm writing to address my concerns for the budget increase for the VPD.

I think this is an unnecessary use of public funds, and I would much rather see these funds going to programs that better support the people here including:

School counselling supports, educational assistance, poverty reduction, affordable housing, Indigenous reconciliation efforts, and environmental stewardship

I was also informed that with this budget proposal, cuts to essential services were being proposed including eliminating the alliance to end homelessness.

It is my opinion that the responsibilities of the Victoria Police should not be spread so widely, and we should allow other specialists to handle cases where they would be able to provide expert help. It is unreasonable to ask the police force to handle all issues, especially where someone more specialized is available. Cutting funding to these specialists, or limiting their funding, while providing more to the police department, is backwards in my opinion.

Thank you,

Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Regarding the Proposed City 2026 Budget
Date: January 19, 2026 at 8:09 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good morning, I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to oppose the proposed 2026 budget. My name is _____, I am a renter who lives on Empire St in Victoria B.C. I want a flourishing and wonderful city. I see so much potential, but your current budget I don't believe moves us in that direction.

In particular, the increase in the police budget fails to address the root causes of the multiple issues facing the city right now. I appreciate that the temptation is to deal with symptoms, via policing, however if you continue to underfund the services and care that people need you fail to address the root causes of crime.

In the same way that shelters treat symptoms of homelessness, without addressing the root causes, policing only "deals" with the symptom. If we want to actual make the city safer, we can and should reinvest in housing, community, mental, and health services. That is, we should deal with the cause(s) of crime, not the symptom of crime.

Using the example of an infection, your current approach simply deals with the fever (in a pretty ineffective way). If we want to become healthier, we need to address the infection with antibiotics.

Police do not prevent crime, they only punish after the fact. Let's invest in things that help people, and we will continue to see crime rates come down.

As a researcher and consultant with lived experience of being disabled, I ask you to invest in a future that cares for people. That helps reduce crime via supporting our neighbours.

Please do not increase the police budget, please instead invest in community services, housing, and parks and rec. Let us all flourish and care for each other.

Thanks,

From:
Subject: Regarding VicPD Proposed Budget Increase
Date: January 21, 2026 at 9:43 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident residing in the Burnside Gorge neighbourhood. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time,

Gorge Road East, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Heject 14% budget increase for VicPD
Date: January 20, 2026 at 5:57 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hi,

My name is _____ and I'm a Victoria resident. I live on Bay street. I am strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the VicPD including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am shocked and furious by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria already is a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live. I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are programs that make it possible to get a foothold in this city. If the city moves ahead with this proposed budget I might be forced to move elsewhere.

We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that people are concerned about public safety, I am too. But I also know that more police are not the answer. I strongly urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead invest these funds in proven community programs.

As someone who plans ot vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

Bay Street, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Heject 2026 Budget increase for VicPD
Date: January 9, 2026 at 5:48 PM
To: councillors@victoria.ca, legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I am a resident of Victoria contacting you to voice my strong opposition to VicPD's request for additional funds through the city's 2026 budget.

I live near the 900 block of Pandora and have been absolutely appalled to see how VicPD officers treat people in this community. I have unsuccessfully filed numerous complaints with the OPCC, including most recently when I obtained video footage of a VicPD officer yelling loudly at a women being detained, calling her a "loudmouth bitch" in front of dozens of people. I filed the complaint in July 2025 and have heard nothing since, despite heaving clear video footage of the event. This is one small example of the dehumanizing mistreatment of our community members at the hands of VicPD, but I've seen and experienced many more.

Aggressive, disrespectful, and often violent behaviour appears to be completely normalized by VicPD as an organization. I'm shocked that these same officers are being welcomed into our schools. It's so inappropriate and unsafe, especially for Black and Indigenous students who are disproportionately targeted by police. I have zero faith in our city's police force and the systems that are supposed to ensure accountability, like the OPCC.

Beyond my own personal experience, there is a strong body of evidence demonstrating that increased policing does not lead to reduced crime. There is no logical rationale for increasing our police budget. We need funding for community services that strengthen our communities, rather than violently tearing them apart. Police do not make our city safer. Policing is an expensive and ineffective use of our tax dollars, and I completely oppose any budget increase for Vic PD.

Thank you,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Heject any funding increase for Victoria Police Department in 2026
Date: January 21, 2026 at 11:04 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good evening. I'm writing to you as someone who was born in Victoria, raised and educated in Victoria, and who has worked for nearly my entire adult life in Victoria. You may note that my address currently locates me in Saanich; nonetheless, I am a resident of and contributor to this city. I have lived and worked in the downtown core; I may live there again if it is within my means. If someone had told me, in my youth, that the city I would decide to make my home in would not only be steeply unaffordable in my adulthood, but that the city government would continually commit to perpetuating the theft of survival gear from homeless people, I would have found it unbelievable. However, this is how things stand today. I suppose I could commend the thought behind providing 25 livable-wage jobs to new police officers, but it's one more aggressive band-aid 'solution' that can't cover up the reality of homelessness forever. I do realize that until we as a nation commit to universal housing, such band-aid solutions will be the first and last idea that our councils and governments are capable of implementing. It is nonetheless a disappointment. Funding paid by residents will continue to be diverted from programs and services that enrich the community and mitigate the root causes of homelessness, and into increased surveillance and cruelty towards people whose primary failing is that they live outside, and can't conceal their problems from the rest of us. It's a shameful and entirely self-defeating waste. I call on you, in the strongest possible terms, to reject any proposed budget increase to the Victoria Police Department, in 2026 and in every year to follow.

Sincerely,

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Heject budget
Date: January 19, 2026 at 11:57 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

I'm a concerned resident of Victoria writing to insist that proposed 14% budget increase for Victoria Police Department, including 25 new officers, is rejected in the upcoming budget. Increased policing is not the way to a safer community, and these funds are desperately needed to support initiatives that actually target core issues and support wellness in our communities, including housing, the arts, libraries, and other public services. Victoria PD is already grossly over funded and under-functional for the purposes they are supposedly there to serve, and I believe that future budgets should remove funding from under-functional and ineffective services, not add more to them hoping that doing so makes them function better.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: Heject VicPD's 2026 budget
Date: January 22, 2026 at 8:15 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom this may concern,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Eldon Pl. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As someone working within supportive housing, and myself being as a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

Within my frontline work with clients that experience homelessness, mental health, and substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on supportive housing sites, streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep, a safe place to use substances, employment programs, or mental health support.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs that will address this issue long term instead of making it worse.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria

From:
Subject: Rejection of Vic PD's Proposed Budget 2026
Date: January 23, 2026 at 10:54 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Gmail is better on the app
Secure, fast and organised email

Hello,

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a Victoria resident living on Prior Street, and I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed 14% increase to the Victoria Police Department's budget, including the hiring of 25 additional officers. I strongly oppose raising property taxes to meet the ever-growing demands of VicPD especially as someone who witnesses the harm that VicPD continues to cause in our communities particularly evidenced by their lack of care and blatantly violent treatment towards vulnerable populations of people such as those who are unhoused.

I want my property taxes to be invested in people and community well-being such as housing, social services, and programs that support our most marginalized residents and not in expanding the police force. I believe that strong, connected, and supported communities are what truly keep us safe, not an increased police presence.

Like many others, I care deeply about public safety in Victoria. However, I do not believe that hiring more police is the solution. I urge the Mayor and Council to stop yielding to VicPD's demands and instead redirect these funds toward meaningful community-based programs.

As someone who intends to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be watching your decisions closely in the months ahead.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Prior Street, City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Rejection VicPD budget increase
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:13 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is ^{Personal P} and I am emailing to voice my opinion on the proposed budget increase for Victoria PD.

Every day I work with unhoused people, specifically those diagnosed with a substance use disorder. Each day I hear about the fear people live with of having their items destroyed or confiscated by bylaw and police officers, the desperation they feel about not having safe shelter, and the absolute devastation having their existence criminalized has on their lives. I see the effect this has on their mental and physical health.

I hear about VicPD officers breaking harm reduction supplies in front of people who need these items to avoid injury, overdose, and death. I hear about officers pouring water on clean new blankets to justify removing them as "trash". The other day a young man told his story through tears of an officer refusing to give back a blanket his late grandmother had made for him. Soon, i know I will be hearing about arrests for small amounts of personal use substances, and the trauma that comes along with constant criminalization. These actions are needlessly cruel, inhumane, and dehumanizing.

All of this is to say that I see the consequences of having a poor social safety net, inadequate housing, and rampant stigma all day. Increasing police budgets with tax payer money that could be provided to initiatives and programs that help improve the social issues that increase a person's risk for problematic substance use (housing, accessible healthcare, childcare, mental health etc.) is redundant and dangerous. If you cared about Victoria and it's citizens (including the houseless and substance affected members of our community) you would vow to fund evidence based programs that actually help instead of doing the same thing over again expecting a miracle.

Thank you for listening and I hope the mayor and council do the right thing by rejecting the proposed increase and work on effective, evidence-based solutions. Having more police to harass, traumatize, and harm marginalized communities is not working and will never make the issue better.

From:
Subject: Resident Opposed to Increase of Funding for VicPD
Date: January 10, 2026 at 4:57 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a resident of Greater Victoria who lives in the boundary between Victoria, and Oak Bay. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

Despite not living in Victoria I spend much of my time there, visiting loved ones, attending arts and culture events, using public transit, accessing health services, working, and more.

As a young artist I am incredibly frustrated with the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter in the Greater Victoria area I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived experience of homelessness and mental health challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs. As someone who has accessed these programs, and have many loved ones who also have I know that they are what truly benefit our city, and its residents.

Thank you for your time.

Greater Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Save \$100,000
Date: January 13, 2026 at 11:56 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I suggest that the annual Victoria gift of \$100,000 to First Nations tribes be cancelled. This is unnecessary and discriminatory.

From:
Subject: tax increase at 10%
Date: January 7, 2026 at 11:32 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

Having had a significant tax increase last year, a 10% increase this year is absolutely horrendous.

This is especially galling in regards to police increase. Where is this money going to? Surely not enforcing bylaws for noise or even speeding? We have never seen police in the suburbs providing some measure of policing for these issues.

So I am totally against this increase.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: tax increase
Date: January 14, 2026 at 6:01 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

As a senior citizen on a fixed income, I am unable to support a yearly increase, as proposed.

The city of Victoria is overstaffed, with an excessive number of managers. To achieve a balanced budget, it is imperative to reduce the number of employees.

I eagerly anticipate the upcoming election and hope that we will elect a council with the ability to effectively manage our city. The current council has proven to be a failure.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: The Need for Fiscal Discipline and Inflation-Aligned Budgeting
Date: January 13, 2026 at 11:37 AM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca
Cc: Victoria Mayor and Council
/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group /cn=Recipients/cn=d6cec02f9d4145f8b1d4478ba6894b54-mayorandcou

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the City of Victoria's continued pattern of budget increases that exceed the national rate of inflation. While I recognize the pressures municipalities face—rising costs, infrastructure needs, and growing service expectations—these challenges do not justify spending growth that outpaces what residents themselves can afford.

When the City increases its budget beyond the national inflation rate, it effectively demands that taxpayers absorb real-term increases in their cost of living. Households and businesses in Victoria must operate within their means, adjusting to inflation without the ability to simply raise revenue at will. It is both reasonable and responsible to expect the City to do the same.

Budget increases above inflation create several long-term risks:

- Erosion of affordability for residents, particularly those on fixed or modest incomes who cannot absorb continual tax hikes.
- Reduced competitiveness for local businesses, which already face high operating costs and economic uncertainty.
- Structural dependency on ever-increasing revenue, rather than disciplined spending, efficiency improvements, and prioritization of essential services.

Victoria *must* commit to curbing its spending so that annual budget growth aligns with the national inflation rate. This does not mean cutting core services; it means managing them more effectively. It means identifying inefficiencies, eliminating non-essential expenditures, and ensuring that every dollar spent delivers measurable value to the public.

Fiscal restraint is not merely a financial principle—it is a matter of fairness, accountability, and long-term sustainability. Residents deserve confidence that the City is stewarding public funds with the same care and discipline expected of any household or business.

I urge Council to adopt a firm commitment to inflation-aligned budgeting and to take the necessary steps to ensure that future spending respects the financial realities faced by the people of Victoria.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Property Owner and Long-time Resident

Victoria, BC

From:
Subject: Vic PD Budget Increase from a concerned citizen
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:06 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, to whom this may concern:

My name is . I am a Victoria Resident, local musician, and have grown up on Vancouver Island my entire life. I reside in Fernwood as a renter, a block away from Pandora St.

Regarding the proposed budget increase for the Vic Police Department this year:

As a musician and music teacher in our community, I am deeply disappointed to hear that the city will be cutting arts and culture funding by 18%, while giving a huge increase to Vic PD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist, considering the lack of affordable music venues for artists to present shows and the high cost of renting and living. (E.G. the City of Victoria owned Coda charges a \$1300 room fee on weekends for artists). Prioritizing the police in next year's budget will have a negative impact on the arts sector which is already struggling.

It has been shown in many studies that the presence of community organizations drastically reduces the amount of violent crime in neighbourhoods. The 2026 Draft budget proposes reduces funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance.

I think we can all agree there is an issue here in Victoria. It's not ok that 2000 people are living on the street in our downtown. But increasing bylaw, temporary housing and Police budgets is not going to help our neighbours. People have interviewed many of the residents of the block downtown, and many residents say that they don't feel safe in short term shelters, due to being attacked by other unhoused folks, or that staying in them is inaccessible due to not being able to bring their pets (which often provide protection for unhoused folks) or the only possessions they have. It's pretty hard to get back on your feet when you don't have hardly any thing or clean clothes.

We need to help folks get rehabilitated, and this means a lot more than just policing their lives and giving them beds to sleep in with high barriers to access. The funds could be much better used by funding community programs. I understand that police often do a lot of social work these days, but having the same people doing social work and also enforcing the law doesn't create a safe environment for our unhoused neighbours.

Please reconsider your decisions to cut funding to Arts and Culture, Neighbourhood associations, Climate Action, Equity Diversity and Inclusion, and Community Grants.

Sincerely,

From:
Subject: vic PD funding is TOO MUCH
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:41 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

We pay more per capita for cops than anyone else in bc!!!

And yet we have 12 hour wait times in urgent care and almost no clinics to go to. No truly affordable housing either.

Why should cops get \$\$\$ while the rest of us are struggling?

If more cops and bylaw are the answer then why hasn't homelessness gone away??? why hasn't addiction been "solved"? Right, because increased policing DOES NOT SOLVE THOSE ISSUES.

Fund community growth and health, DEFUND police and bylaw who eat up funds trying to police homeless instead of spending money where these people could actually be helped.

Better ways to spend this money:

- health care (new clinics, more nurse practitioner clinics, more mental health people to do things like welfare checks WITHOUT guns)
- support for youth coming out of care
- the library (i use this all the time and they are great but could use more ebooks and funding for community programming!)
- FIXING the so called "community and safety well being plan" to include actual fixes not just more cop and bylaw which are clearly not helping!!! if more police fixed the issue then wouldn't people be housed by now?
- more arts and culture events
- more funding for nonprofits
- more green spaces
- actual comfortable public seating downtown and elsewhere
- public washrooms
- HOUSING
- HOUSING
- HOUSING

Please have a heart, listen to logic, and do NOT increase the police budget.

Thank you.

From:
Subject: VicPD budget
Date: January 18, 2026 at 9:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Wark Street. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a homeowner, I am opposed to the city increasing property taxes in order to meet the ballooning demands of VicPD. I want my property taxes to go toward [housing/social programs/arts and culture, etc.], not hiring more police officers, because I know that community is what keeps us safe, not cops.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: VICPD Budget Increase
Date: January 8, 2026 at 12:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I live in Victoria, BC. I am strongly opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived/living experience of homelessness, mental health, or substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that **more police are not the answer**. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Victoria 2026 Draft Budget Input
Date: January 22, 2026 at 6:21 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a student in Victoria, residing on Joseph St. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge the Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Victoria Budget 2026
Date: January 23, 2026 at 2:20 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Good morning,

I have a few comments on the proposed budget and planning:

Policing/Bylaw

I lived above the Save on foods on Pandora for 2 years. Seeing bylaw officers and police officers harass and steal from unhoused residents was heartbreaking. I see this every day even now as I bike through Pandora on my way to work. So many officers just standing around as a threat to anyone who might disagree with what is happening. Therefore increasing the police budget is NOT something I agree with.

Reallocating funds instead to hiring mental health workers, providing safe consumption sites, public bathrooms (of which there are close to none in the city) and showers, shelters, and transitional housing would be a better use of city funding.

Prevent the issue of homelessness at the source rather than trying to police people who are struggling.

Housing

Affordable housing is desperately needed. The "below market rate" so-called affordable housing isn't affordable at all - Canada defines housing affordability as spending no more than 1/3 of income on housing and yet in order for people to qualify for this housing they have to make less than x amount. Well if they can only make 60k a year to qualify and according to Canada should only spend 20k on housing, how will they afford \$2100 in rent? How will the person in the street being told by police to "go home" (I witnessed this interaction) find one if the options are out of reach for even full time workers?

RENT CONTROL IS DESPERATELY NEEDED.

Oaklands
Victoria BC

From:
Subject: Victoria budget response from citizen
Date: January 23, 2026 at 3:27 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

I have read the budget proposal and disagree with Victoria police dept getting such a large increase.

Money should go instead to getting more doctors, nurses, and clinics in the area. So many are still without doctors and walk ins are closing left and right over the years.

Shelter space should be increased as more people become unhoused due to capitalist greedy rent increases. But these spaces need funding! Tired of paying high taxes for cops to have big expensive parties and enjoy \$150k+ salaries. I donate to these orgs but they should be receiving more tax money.

Mental health services and addiction services should be provided to those suffering addiction or mental health issues. Funding should be provided for this as a priority.

Rent caps should be in place so that landlords can't use "the market" to dictate who is and is not able to have a roof over their heads. This would help so many people.

Right now people are suffering and dying on the streets which could be reduced or PREVENTED by policy changes and redirection of funds from police and bylaw.

From:
Subject: Victoria City 2025 Draft Budget comments
Date: December 16, 2025 at 2:36 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Greetings:

My comments re proposed 2026 budget:

. **decrease the size of city staff.** During the term of LIsa Helps, and abled by the City Manager, Victoria saw the departure of many senior staff with necessary institutional memory that was not shared with incoming, new staff who themselves did not have much experience to bring to Victoria city governance. Anyone employed in local, prov'l or federal government is privileged well beyond most residents.

. **reduce the reliance on outside contractors,** except for MAJOR projects. And, the City must keep control of the project and process at all times.

. **I am tired of the annual ask and council compliance with the never-ending increase in the police budget. NO change in this ask every year.** I understand the Mayor's wellness plan; however, the emphasis on police presence to resolve our 'street' problems is a superficial resolution. Sure, I see lots of them walking around - in groups of three - and more, and when gathered around a citizen on the sidewalk in any state of 'distress'. The 'look/appearance' is excessive. What would have more impact, is locking up the drug dealers themselves. Improving the street problems requires a planned and implemented health program, supported by experienced health (of all kinds) workers, with institutional placement and appropriate long-term care/rehabilitation. Not the purview of the City; and, where is the truly creative thinking, collaboration, and action with those experts?

. **increase the number of resident-involved Advisory committees and allocate the staff resources: a suggestion of some \$11K per year at present.** Adding a few more won't break the bank, and likely would result in more resident confidence of how this city is managed, besides 'appearing' more democratic. Promote and encourage widely, to ensure a realistic cross-section of residents and abilities and points of view and get outside the council-majority group-think.

. **be pro-active and look at what lands/properties are sitting unused:** a lot on Chambers that was proposed over 10yrs ago for a co-op; a lot on Cook St a block past the school whose owner was fined for not cleaning up the property. Heavily fine those property owners.

What city properties can be developed for non-profit/co-op housing? How can the city leverage its assets/savings to buy and develop lands for such housing? I do not see any overt movement by the City in this regard.

. **dedicate more resources to PRESERVING our tree canopy.** Quit letting developers rape our greenspaces in pursuit of their desired profits.

. **get realistic about spending taxpayer dollars.** Example: overhaul of Centennial Square. The majority of Council only backed down when citizens - in number and volume - called Bullshit on this plan. And to receive an excessively long letter of justification and placation from one Councillor was met with surprise and disgust. Read the room councillors, and get outside your restrictive bubbles of ageism. Councillors are elected to represent ALL citizens, and to COMMUNICATE effectively with the public at all times. This council is the most closed off, unresponsive elected group I've experienced during my 49 years in Victoria.

Victoria resident

From:
Subject: Victoria city council budget increase to police spending response
Date: January 16, 2026 at 1:51 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To the Victoria city council,

There's a very funny @dril tweet that goes:

"Food \$200

Data \$150

Rent \$800

Candles \$3,600

Utility \$150

someone who is good at the economy please help me budget this. my family is dying"

Recently, it was pointed out to me that the breakdown of these costs looks awfully similar to a city budget breakdown - with police funding in place of candles.

Scented candles are nice. They're pretty and warm and cover up bad smells - but they don't do anything to address where a bad smell is coming from.

Rather than spend almost half of the proposed budget increase on candles - or cops - why not instead invest in a myriad of other services that actually work?

We know that the police are not a preventative measure. Crime is largely a symptom of poverty, which is best treated by increased social services, affordable housing, accessible education, food security, etc.

Additionally, social workers need a bachelors degree. Lawyers study the law for an additional three years, plus a year of articling, and have to pass the bar exam to become fully qualified.

Cops train for less than a year. Someone starting training right out of high school at eighteenth could be handed a lethal weapon before they're legally allowed to purchase alcohol.

So why are we investing so much money in the police, when we could be putting it towards a dozen other more effective services that would reduce — if not eliminate — the need for police in the first place?

Thank you for your time.

From:
Subject: Victoria PD 2026 Budget
Date: January 9, 2026 at 7:48 PM
To: councillors@victoria.ca, legislativeservices@victoria.ca

To whom it may concern,

My name is _____, and I have been living in Victoria (mostly in and around the downtown core, including James bay and fernwood) for over nearly a decade. I am writing to express my opposition to VicPD's proposed 2026 budget.

Year after year, policing continues to receive a disproportionate share of municipal funding, while the community based and social services that truly prevent harm and support safety remain severely underfunded.

I urge you to reject the proposed budget increase for VicPD, including the plan to hire 25 additional officers. Beyond rejecting the increase, I encourage Council to critically examine the existing police budget and identify areas where funds could be reallocated toward community supports and services that address root causes rather than symptoms.

Through my own experience working in community, I have seen firsthand how effective organizations operate with limited resources. Groups such as Peer2Peer Indigenous Society, the John Howard Society, Mustard Seed, and the Victoria Native Friendship Centre represent only a small percentage of the organizations that could make meaningful use of the funds currently proposed for policing. These services provide care, stability, and dignity, while filling gaps left by other failed (governmental) systems and services.

Too much of VicPD's budget is spent on the surveillance and harassment of unhoused people, who are the very community members police are meant to serve. Instead of improving safety, this approach deepens harm and reinforces a cycle of mistrust and displacement. Time and again, communities are promised safety and support, and time and again, they are let down. Things need to change.

Real public safety comes from housing, mental health care, cultural supports, and community led/based solutions. I urge you to prioritize these investments by rejecting VicPD's proposed 2026 budget and committing to a more just and effective allocation of public funds.

Maarsii (thank you),

From:
Subject: victoria Police Department Budget
Date: January 23, 2026 at 1:48 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello, my name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing on Fairfield Rd. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As a person with lived/living experience of homelessness, mental health, or substance use challenges, I am appalled by the City of Victoria's focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria "safer." Police and bylaw continue to harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks. We need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

From:
Subject: Victoria Resident Feedback: 2026-2030 Draft Financial Plan
Date: January 12, 2026 at 8:26 PM
To: legislativeservices@victoria.ca

Hello,

My name is _____ and I am a Victoria resident, residing in Oaklands for the past 11 years. I am opposed to a 14% increase to the budget for the Victoria Police Department, including the hiring of 25 more officers.

As an artist, I am appalled by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% in next year's budget, while giving a huge increase to VicPD. Victoria is already a very challenging place to make a living as an artist and, by prioritizing the police in next year's budget, this will only serve to drive artists away from our city and make it a less vibrant, attractive place to live.

As a renter, I urge Mayor and council to redirect funds from the police into programs that actually make our city safer, such as affordable housing programs. The 2026 Draft Budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighbourhood housing, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city and, without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

As the eldest daughter in my family and supporter of my younger sister, I am concerned how the City of Victoria and Province of BC continue to ignore the evidence surrounding school liaison officers and continue to fund these programs and the police more broadly. Multiple organizations opposed continuing the program, including the BC Teachers' Federation and the BC Human Rights Commissioner, stating that they make schools unsafe for Black and Indigenous students or are not evidence-based. Our students don't need police officers. They need more teachers, special education supports, and after-school programming.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But, I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and Council to stop capitulating to VicPD's demands. Instead, invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, I will be paying close attention to your decisions these next few months.

Thank you for your time.

City of Victoria Resident

_IMG_5995

Hello, my name is _____, I'm a resident in Victoria and the Van Dalhousie St. in Oak Bay and I'm making this video to oppose the increase budget for the Vic PD primarily because of all the things it will cut to make room for this increase of budget.

As an artist in the city, I feel very disappointed that arts and culture are being decreased. The funds to support those programs are being decreased. It's already so hard to be an artist in this city and have opportunities to be an artist and less funding for community grants and things like this that make art possible. All the venue closures in the city there's just less and less opportunity and that to be allocated towards more police is very disappointing.

Also, someone who works in harm reduction, the increased police presence often leaves people scattering rather than actually giving care to those who need it on the street. And as a community member and resident in this city, of course I'm concerned about public safety. But I don't believe that the increase to the budget and what will be cut in order to make that increase will actually provide more safety in our city, especially cuts to affordable housing. A lot of people are struggling because they can't afford shelter, they can't afford their basic needs so desperation leads to increased crime rates. And I don't believe an increased police budget will bring more safety to our city. So I'm disappointed that this is being proposed and move forward and I want to oppose this increase and encourage our funds in the city to be allocated towards the people, Community grants, affordable housing.

As a renter and artist, I think it's just very important that we take care of one another and support those directly who need support. Increased police presence can often bring more fear, more scattering, less support.

Thank you.

2026DraftBudget_VideoSubmissi

on

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a Victoria resident residing on Empire St.

I'm making this video to oppose the 14% increase to the budget of the Victoria Police Department in the 2026 draft financial plan, including the hiring of 25 more police officers.

As someone who has a public health degree and works in the field of mental health and substance use, I'm appalled by the City of Victoria's continued focus on the police as the solution to making Victoria safer. Not only is this not evidence based decision making, but it also makes our city more and more like the United States, where we saw the murders of both Keith Porter and Renee Goode by ICE agents just this week.

Police and bylaw and Victoria routinely harass and traumatize people sheltering on the streets and in parks, and specifically target Indigenous, Black and people of colour. In order to create a safer city, we need to invest in alternatives to the police that address the root causes of homelessness and crime, such as giving people a warm place to sleep or a safe place to use drugs.

Furthermore, as a renter, I urge Mayor and Council to redirect funds from the police into programs such as affordable housing. The 2026 draft budget proposes decreasing funding to community grants, neighborhood houses, and city planning programs such as tenant assistance. These are the types of programs that make it possible for me to find community and get a foothold in this city, and without them, I might be forced to move elsewhere.

I know that many people are concerned about public safety in Victoria, and I am too. But I also know that more police are not the answer. I urge Mayor and council to stop capitulating to Vic's demands and instead invest these funds in community programs.

As someone who plans to vote in the 2026 municipal election, it will be paying close attention to your decisions over the next few months.

Thank you for your time.

_Movie on 2026-01-23 at 7.21

PM.export

Hi, my name is _____ and I've been a Victoria area resident my entire life.

Currently live right downtown on top of the new fire hall on Johnson St. and I'm recording this video because I do not agree with increasing the police budget by 14% this year. I do not support the hiring of more officers at a time when I have friends and family who are unable to afford housing while working full time jobs. I'm an artist who's severely struggling to survive in Victoria

This is my home, but I have no hope of ever owning a home here. It's nearly impossible to get by as an artist in this city, and I'm heartbroken by the city's decision to cut funding to arts and culture by 18% over the next year. We already don't have enough arts and culture in the city. I used to think of Victoria as a city that did have a lot of art scenes going, but now that I'm an artist trying to work in the city, it's becoming harder and harder to get by. There aren't spaces that you can rent for studios, there are no venues to play music in. It's just becoming a widespread problem that needs more funding, not less.

Also, the police thing. The presence of more police officers does the exact opposite of making me feel safer in the city. As someone who's a survivor of sexual abuse, I can tell you that the police never helped me feel safer or got me out of a dangerous situation. I have called the police in Victoria during emergency situations and they have not arrived in time to help me out. On the contrary, community supports have saved my life. Community supports like counseling, social programs, and access to arts and culture saves lives every day, as does access to housing.

I do not support the increase in foot patrol officers, school liaison officers, and heavier bylaw enforcement. Bylaw Enforcement has done nothing but further traumatized people and leave them with less resources to survive.

I want to feel at home in the city and I believe that an increase in community supports, arts and culture will make a difference in the lives of every single person who lives here.

I do not believe that an additional 14% increase in police budget will do anything to improve the lives of most of the cities inhabitants, and \$90 million budget is not what we need to make this city feel better. There's no evidence that increased police spending in Canada has any effect on crime rates. Vic PD has a problem within its own unit of crime happening, whether it's people getting hurt, people getting killed, there's been violence, racism, sexual abuse. I don't feel safer when police are around. If police were in schools when I was a kid, I would not want to go to school. Police - I remember traveling in the States and some family friends talking about police being in their schools and being terrified by the idea of officers with guns having to patrol the school. Like, in what world does that make anyone feel more safe. As a caregiver to a young person I'm really scared that we're ignoring the fact that there's no evidence that school police liaison officers actually improved the safety in schools. There actually is evidence that it makes Black and Indigenous students feel less safe. And I would rather that they feel safe in school considering everything that they have to go through already.

Um, yeah, I guess that's it. I, I really I hope we can divert some of these funds into some areas that could really help our city feel like it's thriving again. I know you guys are doing an impossible job and I'm just hoping for the best. I know, I know we can do better than this.

So yeah, thanks for listening.

WIN_20260123_10_13_29_Pro

Hello, my name is . I'm a resident of the Fernwood neighborhood living on Denman St. Postal code V8R 1Y2, and I'm submitting this video to provide feedback on the proposed budget and to express my really deep concerns about the extent to which this budget prioritizes funding. The Vic PD requested proposal or sorry, proposed budget to Council and its request for funding for the coming years to the extent to which it puts that head of Farm greater concerns and priorities for residents of Victoria like myself.

So just to elaborate on that a bit. Firstly, I'm opposed to the extent to which this would increase property taxes. I understand that this is a budget is calling for a 10.44% increase in property taxes, almost half of which would go entirely to Vic PD. This is to me, unjustified given the extent to which other really critical services and city functions are put behind Vic PD in just this property tax alone. The property tax burden is going to fall on homeowners. It's gonna fall on renters. It's gonna fall on business owners like myself. It's gonna make it be more expensive to live in this city. I understand taxes have to go up, but making them go up an additional 5 percentage points just for increasing the police budget is not in line with the priorities for the city.

Furthermore, yeah, the total increase of increasing VicPD's budget up to 90 million dollars. Having that constitute almost 1/4 of the city's total budget is again, just really disproportionate with, I think the needs of the city, where they're at. And yeah, I guess I'm, I'm, I'm relating to this a lot from my standing, not just as a business owner, but as an environmental scientist, being trained as an environmental scientist. And, you know, I think in that discipline there's a really big emphasis on making decisions based on evidence and prioritizing evidence when you make your claims. And I think there is a real lack of evidence that the previous budget increase at VicPD has called for and been granted by this council, have actually done what they've said they are or have done what they claim to be about. I don't think there's the evidence that public safety has actually improved that really chronic problems like whether it be uh yeah, like actual crime, like crime rates or people in crisis from the poison drug supply, like responses to those increasing the police budget has actually not addressed many of these things. And I think that's in part because money is getting thrown at the police and diverted away from the actual city services that fix these underlying problems. So yeah, I would encourage council or call on council to make these decisions based on evidence. I don't think Vic PD has tried at all to make a case that what they're requesting is based on evidence for what they're claiming this funding will do in the coming years. And I think there's a lot of evidence out there both locally and nationally, cities across Canada, that sinking all this money into police budgets does not address these underlying problems and does not actually improve public safety. So the money is far better spent in other services. And I guess on that note, I, I was really distressed to see that this budget calls for a lot of cuts that I think are many of which are directly relevant to, I think the underlying social problems that Vic PD is claiming it will address and lead to improve public safety with its funding. But again, I don't think that's backed up. And so I really don't want to see these cuts being made to climate action, neighborhoods, EDI, community grants, arts and culture planning, transportation. This is the opposite direction that I think the city needs to be going at this moment in time we're dealing with whether it's the climate crisis or poison, drug supply crisis or cost of living crisis, cutting this array of services is not going to make things better. And diverting that money to the police is also not going to make things better.

So yeah, that that I think summarizes my main points and my main concerns. And I just just to reiterate, I really categorically oppose Council adopting this budget that put so much funding into Vic

PD at the expense of everything else. And I'd encourage Council to look for opportunities to further reduce the VicPD budget.

Thank you.