



February 11, 2020

Her Worship Lisa Helps
Mayor of the City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6
Email: mayor@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor Helps:

Thank you for your letter dated December 18, 2019, containing your concern over the costs associated with policing the core area of the Capital Region District (CRD). As Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, I am pleased to respond.

At the outset of this letter, I wish to advise you that under the *BC Police Act* (the Act), it is my responsibility as Minister to ensure that an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement is maintained throughout British Columbia. My ministry is responsible for setting the objectives, priorities and goals of police services in BC. Day-to-day deployment of police services falls to the RCMP or the jurisdiction's municipal police force.

Your letter requests the government of BC to assist in introducing a funding framework for regional policing and cites consolidation of command and coordination of resourcing and equipment as means to fiscal and operational efficiencies with corresponding benefits to public safety.

Modern day policing issues are cross-jurisdictional in nature and require coordinated policing and law enforcement service delivery that is fiscally and operationally efficient and responsive to local needs. As such, my ministry continues to be committed to working with local governments and police agencies on furthering police service consolidation and integration throughout the province.

You may know that the funding of policing in Canada is a shared responsibility between federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments. The provincial government provides policing and law enforcement to CRD municipalities and unincorporated areas under 5,000 population as per Section 3.1 of the Act. As Co-Chair of the Victoria and Esquimalt Police Board you well know that, under Sections 3.2 and 15.1 of the Act, municipalities with population exceeding 5,000 are wholly responsible for their police and law enforcement services. Further, Section 18.1 states that the councils of two or more municipalities may enter into an agreement providing for the amalgamation of their municipal police departments subject to my overall responsibility to ensure adequate and effective policing and public safety in BC.

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In accordance with these municipal and provincial responsibilities and further to our previous correspondence, I am writing to reiterate that any change to policing in BC is a decision for the municipalities involved and their elected officials, subject to my approval as the Minister. As such, I welcome the opportunity to consider any proposals presented jointly by the municipalities involved.

As it pertains to consolidation of command and coordination of police services in the CRD, ministry resources were committed to support collaboration and consultation between the municipalities and police agencies and devise a governance structure for the integrated policing teams that serve the region. Where practical and appropriate, and consistent with responsibilities within the Act, the Director of Police Services will continue to support this effort and I look forward to the opportunity to contemplate its result.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Farnworth". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety
and Solicitor General