

Johanna Palmer

City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square, Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

February 15, 2018

Dear Sirs & Madams,

I am writing to offer my full support of the police budget recommended by Victoria Police Chief Del Manak.

The increase in the budget is modest considering both the growth in the cities of Esquimalt and Victoria and the current mental health and drug crisis in our region.

Due to the lack of police presence on our streets business and shoppers are increasingly moving out of the downtown core. It's pretty embarrassing when we have the budget to create bike lanes and put endless coats of paint to make "pretty crosswalks." Due to the missing officers, citizens in Victoria are self policing the city sending in pictures and videos of traffic incidents.

I have a good friend who works directly across from the police station who has witnessed addicts shooting up right in front of the main entrance of the station itself.

I've experienced null enforcement of reckless behaviour by cyclists. These examples include: wearing black clothing and no lights or helmets after twilight, riding with no helmet while texting, going the wrong direction in the bike lanes. As a motorist I am required to follow the laws. I am afraid that I may collide with one of these cyclists (who believe in a magical force-field of protection) and end up disabling or killing one of them. I have rolled down my window on occasion and let the offending cyclist know that their behaviour is incredibly dangerous. In return I have been cursed at and spat at. Without enforcement cyclists pay in injury.

As an average citizen I don't perceive that should an incident arise the police will be there. Having police on the street encourages business and tourism and helps with harm reduction. As a kid I was taught that the police are on your side. Having police liaisons in schools used to fill that role for kids. Not having that going is just the tip of a very large iceberg.

This is beginning to feel a bit like the general practitioner crisis. If you have a problem you can visit the station and wait in line. Because clearly if addicts are shooting up in front of the station there must be too few officers to do an effective job. Policing is stressful enough. I stand with the police they need enough responders for safety, vacations covered, retirements refilled. Give them the money they need to do an effective job.

Get it together Victoria! Yours,

Johanna Palmer

cc: Esquimalt City Council, Victoria Police Department, Times-Colonist Editorials



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