

**From:** [Dan Bruyere](#)  
**To:** [Barb Desjardins](#); Council  
**Subject:** Policing, and 2024 Budget  
**Date:** February-24-24 9:16:47 PM

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Good evening, Mayor and Council.

Sue and I have read the information posted on the Town's website and other areas regarding both the policing direction and the 2024 budget, and have further comments and questions on each of them for your consideration. For the most part these are in addition to our recent notes and presentation to the COTW, but I apologize in advance if I tread on old ground from time to time.

### Policing

The consultant has provided a handful of models for council's deliberations. Most of these are beyond our limited knowledge of the subject, but what does catch our eye is the consultant's estimated operating costs of \$8 - 8.5 million for the new models, with several more million layered on for set up and transition. This seems a fairly thin win for all the work going into it. It's also significantly greater than policing costs which have been posted for Oak Bay, Sidney, and Sooke. Are their budgetary levels for policing within reach for Esquimalt? A CBC report from August 20, 2022 showed Sooke, Sidney and Oak Bay costs to be about one fifth, one quarter and one half of Esquimalt's in a chart entitled "Total Annual Operating Cost for Police Services Comparable CRD Municipalities". Admittedly the bars are a little tough to read and there are no data tables but our estimations would be in the ballpark. Could we borrow some of their best practices? StatsCan pegs 2021 Esquimalt and Oak Bay populations as almost identical; Sooke and Sidney less than but not by much.

### 2024 Budget

The direction from the February 5th COTW meeting seemed to move in the direction of an increase of inflation plus one or two percent. A one percent increase would be good; inflation plus nothing would be better. The January CPI-median is around 3.3%. Tax increases have hit inflation rates twice in the past five years as you know so it is achievable. With the high cost of everything else, an inflation-matching property tax increase would be a welcome relief for everyone.

As Mr. Irvine pointed out at that meeting, a 1% change in the tax rate represents about \$320,000. To get from the current proposed budget of 7.65% to an inflation target of 3.3%, we would need to reduce our current budgeted expenditures by about \$1.4 million. Here are some suggestions:

- Defer or delete any new hires, savings \$252,947 this year, \$461,123 next year and every year thereafter, plus inflation. The population of Esquimalt is approximately 17,533 residents according to the 2021 Census of Population. This represents a -0.7% change from the population recorded in the 2016 Census (StatsCan). There were seven new hires last year. Looking at this year's proposal, it appears there is a request for another 7 (Admin - 4, Finance - 1, IT - 1, Recreation - 1). As the gentleman (CAO?) offered at the Feb 5 meeting, perhaps the Council can see which reports and activities they can do

without in the interest of managing the load on these groups.

- Not sure if we can push back on some of the Vic PD proposed increases in hiring and other areas. Almost \$10 million for 18,000 residents is eye-watering.
- Lampson bike lanes \$1.2 million. I have said my piece on this several times to the council; please consider my arguments as stated. Also consider that this route more or less parallels the Galloping Goose trail along that stretch. Recommend pause and assess.
- Bike Lane Street Sweeper \$250,000 - see above.
- Street Sweeper (Replace U211) \$500,000 and Garbage Trucks (2) (Replace U224 and U225) \$1,200,00. Defer?
- Library \$48,438 increase requested - defer?
- Facilities Management Plan \$250,000 and Storm Master Plan \$250,000 - not sure what these are but is this the time to do them?
- Anderson Playground Enhancements \$200,000 - perhaps some handy parents can volunteer to improve the playground?
- Recreation Centre, Sports Centre and Gorge Pavilion - programs, events, out of school care, etc. \$373,038. Should the taxpayer be picking up these costs? Many users come from other communities so would avoid the hit. Higher user fees or less activity to minimize taxpayer impact? Our pool is known as the warmest one in the city; this would have an impact on operating costs and equipment wear and tear. Maybe time to turn down the dial?
- Sidewalk - Kinver/Swinford fr Hadfield to Lyall \$850,000. Apparently this has been without a sidewalk for decades. What's changed so this is the year it has to be done, if ever? Is this precedent setting for other sidewalk-less streets in Esquimalt? Defer?

These are just some of the items in the capital and operating budgets that jump out at us and undoubtedly there are arguments to fund all of them. However, as your constituents, we ask that Council review the proposed budgets line by line and with a sharp pencil to get us back to inflation or close to it, setting us up for even better performance in years to come (the 2012 to 2021 average tax increase was 1.39%).

Unfortunately Sue and I will not be available to attend Council meetings over the next month or so but will follow the proceedings online. We continue to share our questions and concerns with friends and neighbours, and will encourage them to reach out with their own.

Finally, we want to thank the Mayor and Council for all the work you are putting into this process. It is truly appreciated.

Regards,  
Dan Bruyere  
#4 - 704 Rockheights Ave  
Esquimalt, B.C.

No

**From:** [Ken Armour](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Dan Horan](#)  
**Subject:** Standalone police force for Esquimalt feasible but costly - Victoria Times Colonist  
**Date:** February-27-24 7:17:58 AM

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<https://www.timescolonist.com/local-news/standalone-police-force-for-esquimalt-feasible-but-costly-report-says-8361235>

**Ken Armour**

Councillor

Township of Esquimalt | Council

Tel: 1-250-414-7100 | [www.esquimalt.ca](http://www.esquimalt.ca)

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**From:** [Barb Desjardins](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Article on Public Safety:  
**Date:** February-27-24 8:43:48 AM

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Written by Dr E Pepler, very interesting!

Sent from my iPad

**Barbara Desjardins, (She/Her)**

Mayor

Township of Esquimalt | Council

Tel: 1-250-883-1944 | [www.esquimalt.ca](http://www.esquimalt.ca)

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**From:** [Doug Wilson](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** For Agenda Feb 27, 2024  
**Date:** February-27-24 11:50:20 AM  
**Attachments:** [240227 Esquimalt Council.docx](#)

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CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please include the attached letter as correspondence for the February 27 2024 meeting.

Doug Wilson  
291 View Royal Ave



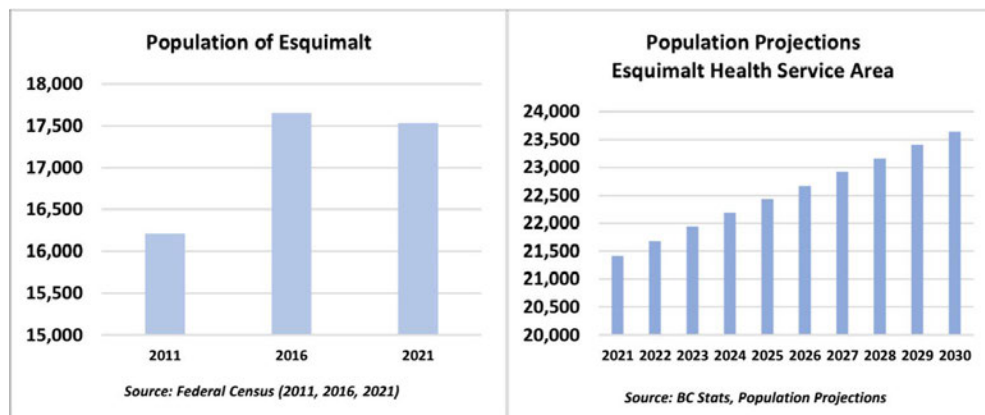
Mayor and Council;

I took a few minutes to read the staff report titled Community Policing Engagement Strategy: Final Report June 20, 2022. This report is included in the agenda for your February 27, 2024 Committee of the Whole meeting. Frankly, I was shocked to see that an endeavor to change the policing of Esquimalt would be based on a report with such fundamental errors.

The assessment of policing cost in this report relies heavily on the cost of policing per capita as well as the projection of Esquimalt population growth to the year 2030. Both of these assessments use inaccurate data as follows.

### Population Projections

On page 8, section 2.3 Demographics and Characteristics the current population estimate for Esquimalt is stated as 17500 and this is a similar figure to the 2021 Canada Census population of 17533. The first chart on page 8, titled Population of Esquimalt (on left, below) correctly displays the Esquimalt population from the 2016-2021 Canada Census data.



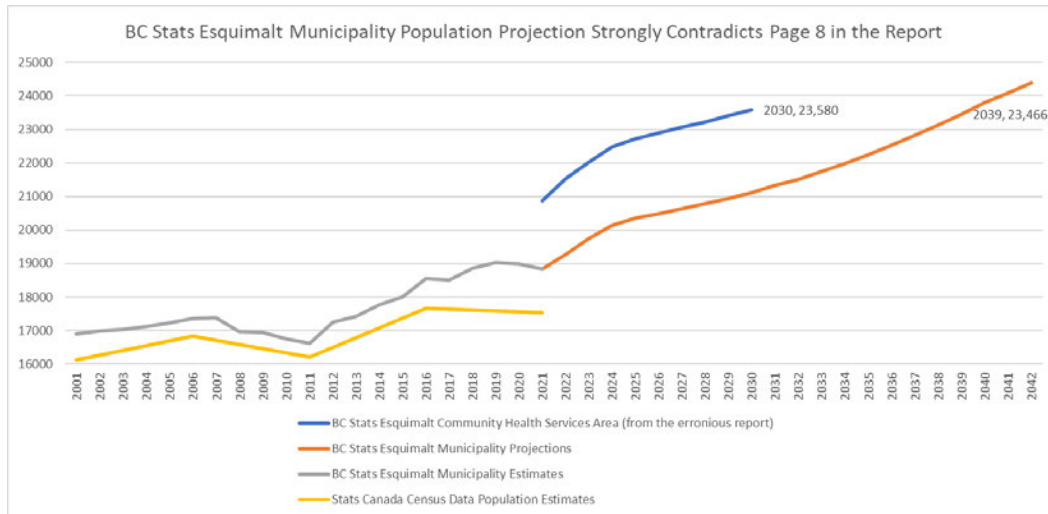
Two Charts from page 8, Community Policing Engagement Strategy: Final Report June 20, 2022

The next chart on page 8, (on right, above) Population Projections Esquimalt Health Service Area, is used in the report to support the need to review the Esquimalt policing model. The report says “Given the expected increase in population in the coming years, it is timely to review the community policing model and the resources that are allocated to the Township through VicPD”.

The problem with this population projection is that it is for an entirely different geographic area than the Canada Census data. The chart shows a BC Stats population projection for the Esquimalt Community Health Service Area. The same source, BC Stats, provides the municipal population projection that covers the same geographic area as the Census and it is obtained using the same tool on the same BC Stats web site. The result is a greatly overstated population growth projection that inflates the current and future population. To be clear: the Esquimalt Municipality 2021 Census population was 17533 and the BC Stats Esquimalt Community Health Service Area 2021 population was 20880, an inflation of 19.1% due to misuse of data.

The actual Esquimalt municipal Stats Canada Census growth estimates (current and past numbers) and the BC Stats population projections are shown below. The report shows Esquimalt population will reach

23, 580 in 2030 while the actual BC Stats projection for the Municipality of Esquimalt shows that population will not be reached until after 2039. Note that the BC Stats data tends to be much higher than the Canada Census data.



### Per Capita Policing Costs

The accuracy of the comparisons of per capita policing costs on page 14 of the report are entirely reliant on showing the correct population and the correct cost of policing. The population figures given are difficult to accept. The population of Esquimalt is given as 17500, a number that is very close to the 2021 Canada Census figure of 17533. All of the other municipalities should therefore be evaluated on the Canada Census figure for each municipality. However, that is not shown in the report table:

Police Department	Population Served	Size of Department	Coverage	2022 Provisional Budget	Increase from 2021	Cost per capita
Esquimalt (vicPD)	17,500	25, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officer in Charge (1)</li> <li>Sworn police Officers: 24 (4 assigned to Vic West)</li> <li>2 civilian staff members</li> </ul>	4 shifts of 5 officers, 24-hour coverage	\$8,666,731	\$266,871	\$487
Central Saanich Police Service (CSPS)	18,000	23, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief (1)</li> <li>Deputy Chief (1)</li> <li>Sworn Officers (21)</li> </ul>	4 shifts of 4 officers, 24-hour coverage	\$5,721,100	\$371,000	\$278
Oak Bay Police Department (OBPD)	19,000	21, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief (1)</li> <li>Deputy Chief (1)</li> <li>Sergeants (6)</li> <li>Constables (13)</li> </ul>	Shifts of 4, 24-hour coverage	\$5,639,700	\$6700	\$273

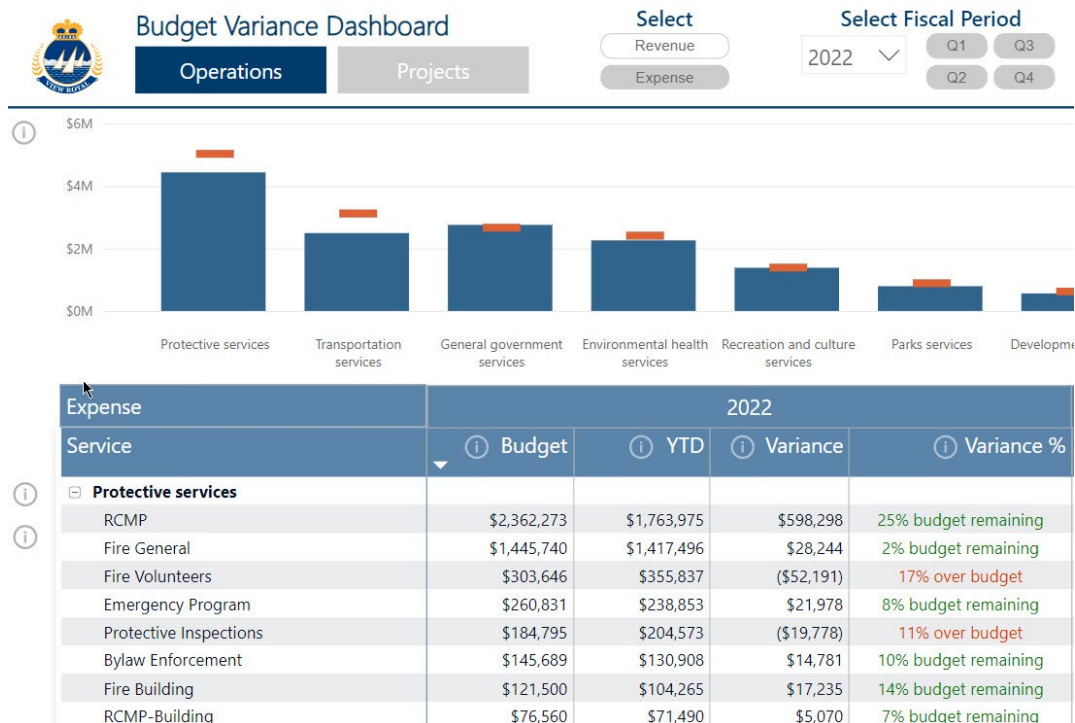
Police Dept	Population serviced	Size of department	2022 Provisional Budget	Cost per capita
Saanich Police Department	125,000	166 sworn officers	\$38,806,000	\$286
Westshore RCMP Contracted through the province	Colwood: 19,387	18 police resources	\$4,019,642	\$207
	Langford: 44,044	53 police resources	\$11,743,755	\$267
	View Royal: 11,809	12 police resources	\$1,479,755	\$125
Sidney/North Saanich RCMP*	Sidney: 12,312	15 officers	\$2,653,39	\$216
	North Saanich: 11,965	11 officers	(30% covered by federal funds) \$1,756,400 (30% covered by federal funds)	\$147
Sooke RCMP Contracted through the province*	15,083	13 officers	\$2,265,030 (10% covered by federal funds)	\$141

Municipality	From the Report	2021 Canada Census
Esquimalt	17500	17533
Central Saanich	18000	17385
Oak Bay	19000	17990
Saanich	125000	117735
Colwood	19387	18961
Langford	44044	46584
View royal	11809	11575
Sidney	12312	12318
North Saanich	11965	12235
Sooke	15083	15086

Inconsistent use of population data skews the per capita policing cost assessment in the report.

The per capita cost of policing shown in the same table is, of course, reliant not just on consistent and accurate population figure but also the 2022 budget figures for the cost of policing. Lacking the time to confirm the costs in each of the municipalities I will simply point to one I am familiar with, View Royal.

The Esquimalt report states that the 2022 budget for policing in View Royal was \$1,479,755. In fact the budget was \$2,362,273 as shown in this screen shot from View Royal. This calls all of the other costs listed in the table into question.



Sincerely,

Doug Wilson