

Deborah Liske

Subject: FW: Letter in support of increased police funding/resources

From: Stephen Green <Green@vcm.bc.ca>

Date: November 15, 2021 at 9:29:47 AM PST

To: mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca, Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@esquimalt.ca>

Subject: Letter in support of increased police funding/resources

Dear Mayor Helps & Council, and Mayor Desjardins & Council:

I am writing to you to express my concern about the escalating level of crime in Victoria and to advocate for additional resources for the Victoria Police Department.

When I first arrived in Victoria in 2012 to begin my work with the Victoria Conservatory of Music (VCM), I commuted to and from work from an apartment block near the intersection of Head Street and Esquimalt Road. I mostly travelled by BC Transit, however often walked the approx. 5 km early mornings, and early to late in the evening, depending on what events we had going on at the VCM. While at the VCM, I would frequently venture out to local places to eat, buy groceries, etc., all within a few blocks of the VCM. Even though I have always encountered reminders along the way of the ongoing urgent need to address homelessness and mental health/addiction in Greater Victoria, and have often joined in to advocate to the province to do more in support of all of those in such desperate need, the level of crime in the city seemed manageable during that time, and I never personally felt unsafe. I moved out to Victoria from Toronto, and through my work there had a very good idea of what an unsafe neighbourhood could look like.

The past 5 – 6 years however have shown an apparent systemic collapse in the ability of the Victoria Police Department to proactively prevent crime throughout the city. The Violent Crimes and Property/Theft statistics provided by Vic PD crime maps supports this observation. Seeing that just in the past 30 days there have been violent assaults on Pandora and Quadra immediately adjacent to the VCM comes as no surprise to me, and further supports my observations. Seeing the alarming increase in the number of incidents locally that require police, and hearing how members of Vic PD personnel are on leave due to working too much overtime to cover lost shifts, or due to PTSD, there is clearly a problem, and it seems to point to Vic PD being under resourced.

Around the Pandora / Vancouver / Johnson / Quadra block especially it is astonishing how much drug dealing and criminal activity we see going on in plain sight, and it is saddening to know how so much of this escalation is due to criminals not from this island at all, but who have come here to prey on the vulnerable individuals in the area who are experiencing homelessness.

I greatly respect and admire the work of our Police and imagine how much more effective that work could be if properly funded. Additional resources would go a long way to tipping the scales back in their favour, allowing them to restore the level of law & order in the city that I know I very much appreciated when I arrived in Victoria. I am deeply concerned for the wellbeing of all of those living, working, and simply trying to “exist” in this city, and hope that you will be concerned as well, and consider approving an increase to Vic PD resources.

Thank you,



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