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December 1, 2020

ATTENTION: BC Premier John Horgan and BC Solicitor General Mike Farnworth:

The Surrey Board of Trade is writing to you to ensure that, in your responsibility as a provincial government, Surrey's public safety is secure, just and resilient.

The Surrey Board of Trade presented our Surrey budget recommendations on November 30 at a public hearing of the City of Surrey Finance Committee. The Surrey Board of Trade monitors public sector spending to maximize productivity in the economy and encourage growth in the private sector. The city budget is important as we evaluate whether Surrey's tax rates are conducive for business growth, business retention and infrastructure investments. Our message was that, especially in light of the pandemic, the City of Surrey budget needed to support and focus on only economic recovery initiatives.

The City of Surrey Budget, which has been approved by the Finance Committee, with the expected approval to also take place at the next City of Surrey Council meeting, chose again not to increase the number of RCMP officers in our growing city for 2021 or for 2022. Conversely, the contract for the RCMP is to end in the first quarter of 2021.

Surrey's public safety will be compromised during the transition as \$45 million is cut from the Surrey RCMP budget for 2021. This means that there has been no RCMP officer increase for the past two years and there will not be an increase for the next two years despite continued population growth (1,000-1,200 people per month are moving into Surrey.) In 2023, 10 additional police officers will be hired and each subsequent year for capacity improvements – this investment was needed in 2018 when Mayor and Council did not increase the number of police officers.

It is not known when the new Surrey Police Service officers will be trained and ready to go on the ground. Further, trust with a new police force needs to be built over time with a new police service.

The BC Police Act states that:

Part 2 — The Minister - Adequate level of policing and law enforcement

2 The minister must ensure that an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement is maintained throughout British Columbia.



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Regulations respecting policing and law enforcement

4 (1) *Despite section 3, on the recommendation of the minister, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations to enhance, provide or reorganize policing and law enforcement in any or all areas of British Columbia, including, without limitation, in any or all municipalities to which section 3 (2) applies.*

(2) *Costs incurred by the government under subsection (1) of this section in respect of a municipality to which section 3 (2) applies are a debt due to and recoverable by the government from the municipality.*

4.01 (a) *the minister considers that the regulations are necessary*

(i) *to address the frequency or complexity of criminal activities or investigations, or*

(ii) *to promote efficient or equitable delivery of policing and law enforcement services*

The Surrey Board of Trade asks the BC Government to take immediate action to explore if:

1. Service levels for public safety will be compromised during the transition in Surrey;
2. Sophisticated IT and associated equipment/infrastructure will be implemented during the transition and when the RCMP contract ends in 2021;
3. The Surrey Police Board is ensuring governance oversight of themselves to ensure public safety in Surrey; and,
4. There will be public trust in the new Surrey Police Service in Surrey to ensure public safety in Surrey.

The Surrey Board of Trade represents 6,000 member contacts. We support business and attract business to Surrey. Public safety matters to business. I hope that you can respond and take immediate action on this urgent, pivotal time in Surrey, in our province and in our nation.

Please feel free to contact me at 604-634-0342 or at anita@businessinsurrey.com for any additional information you may need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A Huberman', written in a cursive, flowing style.

H. Captain (Navy) Anita Huberman
CEO, Surrey Board of Trade



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CC. SURREY MLA'S

Harry Bains, Garry Begg, Jagrup Brar, Bruce Ralston, Jinny Sims, Rachna Singh, Mike Starchuk
Stephanie Cadieux, Trevor Halford