

New Survey Confirms Ongoing Strong Support for Retaining Surrey RCMP, Resistance to B.C. Taxpayers Funding Surrey Police Service

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Surrey, BC — Key findings from a Pollara Strategic Insights online survey of 1,103 Lower Mainland residents, conducted May 3 to 7, 2023, reveals that a majority of Surrey residents and a plurality of Lower Mainland residents support retaining the RCMP in Surrey and do not want provincial tax dollars to subsidize the new Surrey Police Service.

“Consistent with results from previous surveys, nearly 6 in 10 Surrey residents (58%) favour retaining the Surrey RCMP – more than double the number of those that think the City should proceed with the Surrey Police Service (28%),” said Brian Sauvé, President and CEO, National Police Federation.

“The Solicitor-General’s expensive offer to subsidize the Surrey Police Service is not well supported – in fact, a majority (61%) of Metro Vancouver residents outside Surrey disagree with provincial taxpayers subsidizing the new Surrey Police Service in the amount of \$150 million over five years,” he added.

A strong majority of Surrey residents indicated that the B.C. government has played politics on this issue at the expense of Surrey taxpayers (73%); that they should give Surrey the same money for policing regardless of which police service is chosen (73%); and that local NDP MLAs should have done more to stand up for local property taxpayers to avoid unaffordable policing costs (79%).

“Lower Mainland residents clearly paid attention to Public Safety Minister Farnworth’s long-awaited announcement on the future of policing in Surrey, but they remain in limbo thanks to unknown costs, a lack of transparency, and no clear path forward,” said Trevor Dinwoodie, Pacific/North Region Director, National Police Federation, longtime Surrey resident and former Staff Sergeant with Surrey RCMP. “This is neither fair nor desirable for Surrey residents who voted in October to retain the RCMP, for Surrey RCMP Members who continue to face professional uncertainty as this issue drags on, for residents and businesses whose costs of living continues to rise, and for those interested in a career in public safety in the region.”

The provincial position of preventing the Surrey RCMP from recruiting from other RCMP detachments, while allowing the SPS to recruit “without restrictions”, was rejected by a majority of respondents. When asked their views on the recruitment of policing candidates, regional residents indicated by more than a 2 to 1 margin (51% to 20%) that the provincial government should treat the RCMP and the SPS equally and allow them both to recruit from the same pool of candidates.

Recruitment has been posing a challenge for all police services across Canada and internationally. It’s not fair or appropriate for government representatives to present this as an RCMP issue, when its root cause is a chronic lack of RCMP funding from successive provincial governments.

“Since 2020, the National Police Federation has predicted that B.C. taxpayers will be on the hook for a failed police transition, and we now have a glimpse into those costs,” added Sauvé.

An overview of key findings of the survey results is available here: [Key Findings May 2023](#)

As a guideline, a probability sample of this size carries a margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20.