

Victoria City Police Union  
Media Release

February 15, 2019

## **VICTORIA CITY POLICE UNION SAYS COUNCIL DECISION WILL IMPACT SAFETY IN VICTORIA**

The Victoria City Police Union (VCPU) is shocked and disappointed with Victoria City Council's decision yesterday to deny the requested budget increase, which would have allowed for the hiring of critical officers for the under-resourced local force.

Without the increase, members are concerned that the department will be forced to cut front line positions like ACT, HART, or IMCRT Officers, who provide services that contribute to the vibrancy of our city and that keep some of our most vulnerable citizens safe. As the result of cutbacks and an increasing demand for service, the Victoria Police Department was forced to cut school liaison officer positions earlier this year.

'When it comes to crime, our officers deal with more violent crime and have a higher criminal case load than any other municipal department in BC, but just looking at crime rates is misleading', Sean Plater, VCPU president says. "Crime rates are not an accurate reflection of all the issues officers are facing in Victoria every day".

"The police respond to many types of calls that are not classified as crimes, such as suicidal people, drug overdoses, missing persons, unwanted persons, sudden deaths, disturbances and many others because we are required to or the public expects us to."

The numbers:

- The Victoria Police Department has the highest criminal case load per officer of any municipal police department in BC. 'Police Resources in British Columbia 2016' Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (latest available stats)
- Victoria has the highest crime rate of any municipal department in BC. 'Police Resources in British Columbia 2016' Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Victoria has the highest violent crime rate of any municipal police department in BC The 'British Columbia Policing Jurisdiction Crime Trends 2008 – 2017' Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- According to Maclean's Magazine, Assault rates in Victoria and Esquimalt were more than twice the national average in 2017
- According to Maclean's Magazine, Sexual assault rates in Victoria and Esquimalt were almost 3X the national average in 2017

- Based on information in the Edmonton Journal article ‘Dumping Ground’ (Sept. 25, 2018), Victoria has almost 9X the national average of federal parolees per capita (Victoria 218/100,000 National 24/100,000)
- On average, Victoria officers receive over 160 calls for service on any given day
- Victoria Police responded to 5,886 calls for service to six downtown shelters during the first eight months of 2018 – that’s close to 24 calls per day to those locations alone
- Victoria & Esquimalt’s Crime Severity Index (CSI) of 114 is nearly 60% higher than the average Canadian CSI of 71.

The VCPU is encouraging Victoria City Council members to reconsider this decision.

For more information:

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