



# Staff Report to Committee of the Whole

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**DATE:** Monday, February 27, 2023

**DEPARTMENT:** Finance

**SUBJECT:** City of Langford RCMP Member Staffing

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## **BACKGROUND:**

Under the *BC Police Act*, a municipality is responsible for the costs of providing its police services when its population exceeds 5,000 persons. These municipalities may choose to form their own municipal police department, contract with a municipal government for services from an existing municipal police department, or contract with the provincial government for RCMP municipal police services.

As Council is aware, the police service for the City of Langford is the RCMP as contracted with the Provincial Government.

## **COMMENTARY:**

As mentioned above, the cost associated with providing police services for the City is the responsibility of the municipality. Under the contract for services between the RCMP and the Provincial Government, the City, having a population of over 15,000, is responsible for paying 90% of the cost of the service. In 2022, the cost per officer for the RCMP was \$213,988. This cost per officer is inclusive of wages, benefits, vehicles, equipment and uniforms.

As public safety has always been a priority of the City, in 2017, Council began a conscious effort to increase the number of officers serving the community on a per capita basis. In 2017 the ratio of police officers to residents (the "Cop to Pop ratio") for the City of Langford was approximately 1:1000, meaning there was one (1) RCMP officer to every 1000 Langford citizens. Believing that the ratio was too high, Council made the decision to begin working towards a Cop to Pop ratio of 1:850. In approximately 2021, Council discussed working towards a Cop to Pop ratio of 1:750. Due to the increase in population and Council's direction to lower the ratio, the City has gone from an "authorized strength" (number of officers authorized to police for the City) of 38 in 2017 to an authorized strength of 61 in 2022.

As of the date of the 2021 census, Langford's population was 47,286. Applying a 5% growth rate to the 2021 population, 2022 approximate population is 49,650, making our current Cop to Pop ratio 1:813. In order to maintain approximately the same ratio for 2023, the addition of two officers would be needed. The 2022-2026 Five Year Financial Plan includes the addition of two officers in 2023. At this time, the

RCMP is requesting the addition of five officers in 2023 in an effort to move the City closer to a Pop to Cop ratio of 1:750.

Staff have attached the *Police Resources in British Columbia, 2021* report for information. Among other things, this report provides a third-party evaluation and comparison of the policing jurisdictions in the Province. It is worth noting that in this report, prepared in December 2022, the City of Langford had an established strength of 58 officers for a population of 47,286, with a Cop to Pop ratio of 1:815. The average across the province for all RCMP detachments serving communities above 15,000 in population was 1:806. It is also worth noting both the Crime Rate and Case Load statistics; for comparison, in 2021 the City of Langford had a crime rate of 48 compared to the provincial average of 97 and a case load of 39 compared to the average of 74. Note that in the attached report, the “total” column on Page 9 is not the average; therefore, the average as calculated does not agree to the “total” column in the attached report.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The City of Langford’s 2022-2026 Five Year Financial Plan includes provisions for the addition of seven new RCMP officers every three years. This was intended to be comprised of three officers in the first year (2022), two in 2023, two in 2024, three in 2025 and two in 2026. These projections were based on continuing to maintain the current ratio of 1:815 with the intention of gradually getting to the 1:750 ratio as directed by the previous Council.

The Table below provides an approximate cost of adding RCMP officers according to the current Financial Plan and corresponding approximate ratio; and the number of officers required and coinciding cost of obtaining a “Cop to Pop” ratio of 1:750

Current Ratio					1:750	
Year	Estimated Population	# of RCMP Officers	Approximate Cost	Approx. Ratio	Officers required to 1:750 Ratio	Cost
2022	49,650			1:813		
2023	52,132	2	\$400,585	1:788	5	\$1,001,462
2024	54,218	2	\$416,609	1:802	3	\$ 624,914
2025	56,386	3	\$649,910	1:797	3	\$ 649,910
2026	58,642	2	\$450,604	1:805	3	\$ 675,906

Each officer, in 2022, cost the City of Langford 90% of \$213,988, a figure that will continue to increase each year with inflation, increased salaries and increased equipment costs that are factored into this “total” cost of an officer.

The other cost Council should be aware of when providing direction on the authorized strength is the City's obligation to provide municipal employees to support the RCMP Detachment. For every three RCMP officers, the City has historically provided a municipal employee (an "ME") at the RCMP detachment. While not every ME is paid the same wage, the average cost to the municipality per ME is approximately \$80,000.

**OPTIONS:**

**Option 1**

THAT Committee of the Whole directs staff to use a target "Cop to Pop ratio" of 1:\_\_\_\_\_ for the 2023 Budget and 2023 – 2027 Five Year Financial Plan for consideration;

**OR Option 2**

THAT Committee of the Whole receives this report for information only.

**SUBMITTED BY: Michael Dillabaugh, CPA, CA, Director of Finance**

**Concurrence:** Donna Petrie, Senior Manager of Business Development and Events

**Concurrence:** Yari Nielsen, Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities

**Concurrence:** Matthew Baldwin, MCIP, RPP, Director of Planning and Subdivision

**Concurrence:** Katelyn Balzer, P.Eng., Director of Engineering and Public Works

**Concurrence:** Marie Watmough, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

**Concurrence:** Braden Hutchins, Director of Corporate Services

**Concurrence:** Darren Kiedyk, Chief Administrative Officer