

Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
PO Box 9010 Stn Prov Gov  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

January 6, 2025  
PSSG.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Garry Begg:

**RE: RCMP Service to the City of Fort St. John**

I am writing today to express my concern about the RCMP service to the City of Fort St. John as it relates to the Regional General Investigation Service Positions which are supposed to be staffed at the Fort St. John Detachment. These positions were introduced into the detachment nearly twenty years ago and have been an important component of the Provincial contribution to regional policing in our area. These positions have now been vacant for nearly three years. During this time, we have made numerous inquiries with the RCMP who have occasionally reassured us that efforts are being made to staff these positions. However, there has been a complete lack of results from these efforts leading us to believe they were neither genuine, nor effective. Recently, we have been given the impression that these efforts have stopped, and that the RCMP feel they can adequately serve our needs from Prince George. We are particularly suspicious of the sincerity of efforts to staff these positions since communications from the RCMP have repeatedly sought to reassure us and convince us of the absurd notion that our regional needs will be better served by resources based on the other side of the Pine Pass. I will not spend much time rebutting this clearly ridiculous notion.

We also want to talk about the chronology of the positions and the way in which they were removed from the local detachment without any consultation, and in a manner that has come across as deceitful. We learned of the intention to remove these positions from the Peace Region after being inadvertently copied on an email by the then district Commander, Warren Brown. When we challenged the decision and the lack of consultation, we were advised that the same quality service could be provided to the region from Prince George. It is absurd to suggest that these positions could provide the same support for our region remotely. These positions are a crucial support for serious investigations in the region and support a broad geographical area including Dawson Creek, Northern Rockies and many smaller communities in the Northeast such as Tumbler Ridge, Hudson's Hope and Chetwynd. They also take a role in managing a portion of the workload in serious and complex investigations that fall within the Fort St. John detachment. Ultimately, any removal of these resources creates pressure on the city funded plainclothes resources which then need to compensate and conduct investigations outside the municipal boundaries. Clearly, if the regional GIS resources were in place, this would be something that would be tolerable in an integrated detachment model. With those resources removed, it creates an unfair extra burden on our city budget, and our city funded resources.

The current state of affairs is particularly confounding given that during the construction of our new police detachment we built dedicated office space for the Regional GIS team at a cost of nearly two million dollars. As this space sits vacant, and our own municipal officers must compensate for the workload that is no longer being addressed, we have reached a high level of frustration.

Two years ago, we were reassured when our conversations with the then director of Police Services Wayne Rideout, agreed with us on all points. We were advised that the issue raised by the transfers out of our community, and the subsequent failure to re-establish the positions were unauthorized and that this would be reversed. It has been some time, and we have not been reassured by the token efforts to fill these positions. We want to take the time in this letter to stress the impacts on our community resources and also the impact it has had on public safety in the Peace Region. It will not be lost on you that serious crime in the region served by these dedicated resources has increased, this is no coincidence. As you are aware, the number of provincial resources in detachments is contentious and nearly all municipalities feel that the Provincial complement is inadequate. The removal of resources from our detachment without communications is particularly difficult to accept.

Our staff have been in regular contact with the new District Officer, C/Supt. Brian Edmonds and Supt. Pikola who have left us with the impression that efforts to recruit replacements into these positions have been unsuccessful due to lack of interest, and that they are no longer making efforts to restore these positions.

I would like to request that this issue be resolved through restoring the law enforcement resources our communities deserve, and have lost, to take action against our climbing crime rates.

Sincerely,



Lilia Hansen  
Mayor, City of Fort St. John

cc: City of Dawson Creek  
Northern Rockies Regional Municipality  
District of Tumbler Ridge  
District of Chetwynd  
District of Hudson's Hope  
Peace River Regional District  
C/Supt. Brian Edmonds North District Officer, Prince George BC