

Website FAQ

About the Surrey Police Service

1. Is the Surrey Police Service (SPS) official?

Yes. The SPS has a provincially appointed Surrey Police Board that is currently working on the oversight, governance, recruitment and hiring the new Chief Constable. Surrey's City Council unanimously voted to approve the creation of an independent police service and the Province of British Columbia approved it.

2. Why does Surrey need an independent, municipal police service?

- **Surrey is growing:** As one of the fastest growing cities in Canada, with a population of 578,000, Surrey is currently the *only Canadian municipality* with more than 300,000 residents without its own independent, municipal police department.
- **Public safety is a priority:** While Surrey is already a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family, the city is facing challenges that require a community-centric approach to policing.
- **Police services are evolving:** As an independent service overseen by a citizen-led Board, the Surrey Police Service will be best equipped to respond to the complex root causes of crime afflicting the city while reflecting the priorities of its diverse communities.

3. What is the launch date for the Surrey Police Service? When will I see officers on the street?

While an exact launch date is yet to be determined, the Surrey Police Service (SPS) is aiming to have its first officers on the streets of Surrey by Spring of 2021. The SPS's operational transition plan will be developed by the Police Chief in partnership with the Surrey RCMP's leadership.

4. When will the new Chief be announced?

The Surrey Police Board officially launched the process to recruit its first Chief Constable on August 13, 2020. Prior to this, months of background work went in to preparing for hiring a Chief, including retaining a professional search firm. At this stage, the Board is evaluating candidates and looks forward to hiring an experienced policing leader to guide the SPS on its mission to become a centre for excellence for policing in BC and Canada and develop into world-class police service.

5. How can I be a delegate to the Police Board

The Board has four main criteria to evaluate a delegation:

- a. It must relate to SPS services or policies
- b. It must affect a segment of the population and not an individual
- c. It must relate to a strategy of policing, and not the actions of a single officers
- d. It must relate to the Board's oversight mandate, rather than day-to-day police operations.

Topics outside of the Board's mandate, such as the decision by City Council to transition to a municipal service and terminate its contract with the RCMP, or matters related to a referendum, are not within the Board's scope and will not be heard by the Board.

6. Why are there petitions circulating about the SPS not being a “done deal”?

The City of Surrey’s transition to an independent police service is in fact a done deal. In 2018, Surrey’s City Council voted unanimously to end its policing contract with the RCMP, giving the required 2-year notice to terminate the contract. In February 2020, the Province of British Columbia approved the creation of the Surrey Police Board (SPB), which is responsible for creating and governing the Surrey Police Service. The SPS is targeted to have its first officers on the street by the spring of 2021.

7. What is the role of the Province in creating the SPS?

The Provincial government has authority to grant approvals to Surrey to create the SPS. A detailed timeline and clarity on the role of the Provincial government can be found [here](#).

8. What is the budget for the SPS? How much will it cost?

The Board will submit a provisional budget to City Council by November 30, in accordance with the legislated requirements of the *Police Act*. Due to the complexities of the transition, the total budget will be determined by the Chief Constable in consultation with the Board. The Board will continue to work with the City of Surrey to develop an SPS budget for 2021.

9. Will there be fewer police working for SPS at a greater cost compared to the RCMP?

As Surrey grows, the authorized strength of the SPS will be determined by the Board in consultation with the Chief Constable. This number of officers will be a result of developing a policing model based on the priorities that will be identified through public consultation. If the SPS requires an increase in officers, the Board will table a budget reflecting that increase to City Council for approval.

There are many differences in costs between the RCMP and an independent police service and it is difficult to make accurate comparisons. For example, under an RCMP contract, Surrey pays administration costs to the RCMP for provincial and federal administration, which will not be an expense for the SPS.

10. What if the budget for the police service is not approved? Will that impact the transition and the ‘go live’ date for the service?

In the event that any municipality in British Columbia fails to pass a budget related to city services, the matter is taken to the province for arbitration.

11. Does the City of Surrey have the funding required to launch its own service?

Policing services in all municipalities is one of the largest budget items, and Surrey is no different. In its budget, the City has provisioned for costs to launch the Service and further questions related to this should be directed to the City of Surrey.

Once City Council approves the annual SPS budget, it will be governed by the Police Board and managed by the Police Chief.

12. Will there be more community consultation?

With the leadership of the Surrey Police Service's Chief Constable, the Board will undertake extensive community engagement efforts to gather insights from the public. Feedback on the key concerns and priorities of Surrey residents, Indigenous residents, businesses, health, educators, not for profit organizations and community groups will guide the development of the SPS' first Strategic Plan. The plan will integrate the priorities, goals and objectives of the City of Surrey and the Province. This work will commence shortly after a Chief is hired.

13. Why not hold a referendum in order to hear from the residents of Surrey?

Holding a referendum is not within the mandate of the Surrey Police Board, it is under the jurisdiction of the City of Surrey. There are very specific terms associated to referendums, and more information can found [here](#).

14. Does SPS need to find new buildings and purchase new cars and equipment?

Surrey owns or leases all of the building currently occupied by the RCMP. As the transition occurs, space will be turned over to SPS as it grows. Existing equipment such as cars and radios, for example, is paid for by the City of Surrey and through various agreements and arrangements, will be transferred to SPS.

15. Will SPS have specialty units such as Emergency Response Teams?

The SPS will have the opportunity to join integrated policing units such as Emergency Response, the Integrated Homicide Investigations Team and the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (Gang suppression).

About the Surrey Police Board

1. What is the role of the Chair?

The Mayor is the Chair of the Surrey Police Board pursuant to the BC Police Act and is a non-voting member of the Board, except in the case of a tie.

2. Who is on the police board?

- **Doug McCallum:** Chair, Mayor of Surrey
- **Cheney Cloke:** Vice-Chair, Director at the Fraser Health Authority
- **Jessie K. Sunner:** Vice-Chair, In-House Legal Counsel for the Hospital Employees' Union
- **Bob Rolls:** Vice-Chair, Board Member for E-Comm 911, the Judicial Council of British Columbia, EasyPark Corporation, 58 West Hastings, Langara College and Kwantlen University
- **Chief Harley Chappell:** Chief of the Semiahmoo First Nation
- **Manav Gill:** Manager, Clinical Operation at Fraser Health
- **Elizabeth Model:** CEO, Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association
- **Meena Brisard:** Regional Director for the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
- **James Carwana:** Independent mediator and arbitrator

3. How is the police board appointed?

The Surrey Police Board is an appointed body by way of an Order in Council signed by the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. There are 8 appointments: 7 are provincially appointed and one is

recommended to the Province by the City Council through a Council motion. It is important to note that the municipal appointee is also appointed through an Order in Council.

Board appointments can be for as little as one year, or for up to six years maximum for any one Board member.

4. What does a Police Board do?

The Board is responsible for the oversight of the Surrey Police Service, approves all SPS policies and budgets, and is responsible for all policy complaints against the Service. The Board hires the Chief Constable.

The Board will have regular public meetings (approximately monthly) with the Chief Constable. The Chief will report to the Board on a variety of topics including ongoing spending, complaints against officers, crime data, human resources, and other topics as required.

5. Is the Surrey Police Board responsible for the RCMP?

The Board does not have authority over the RCMP, including the costs associated to contracted services. The RCMP is not accountable to a local civilian oversight Board. Instead, the RCMP members in Surrey are ultimately accountable to the Federal RCMP in Ottawa.

6. What oversight does the Board have as it relates to costs of the transition to the SPS?

Police financing through a transition to the RCMP has three distinct budget streams: the RCMP contract policing, the transition costs and the SPS budget. The Board has complete oversight of costs related to the Surrey Police Service but is not responsible for either contract RCMP policing or the City of Surrey transition costs.

7. How does financial oversight of the SPS work?

As a legislated requirement, the Board has until November 30, 2020 to present a police service budget to the Surrey City Council for consideration. The SPS' financial framework is separate and distinct from the City's police transition budget. The Board is only responsible for the development of the SPS' budget and will table budgets as per legislation. The information contained in those budgets needs to be ratified by City Council before being made public.

8. When will the Board consult with the public on the SPS?

The Board will work with the Chief Constable, once appointed, to conduct extensive consultation with Indigenous communities, businesses, not-for-profits, health, education, community groups, and residents of Surrey.