

March 29,2021

**For Immediate Release and Distribution**

**Surrey Police Service is Established and Moving Forward  
Police Chief's first 15 weeks solidify commitment to safe and successful transition**

Surrey - Today marks 15 weeks on the job for Surrey Police Service Chief Constable Norm Lipinski in what he describes as an “exciting and fast-paced time of both accomplishment and challenge.”

“I knew when I accepted this role it would be one of the biggest challenges of my career,” says Chief Lipinski. “I remain committed to creating a municipal policing model with its operational roots right here in Surrey. My focus, and that of the Leadership team, continues to be to move through the development process creating an organization that is community-centered in its service philosophy.”

Today, Surrey Police Service is established and recognized as a police service in the Province of British Columbia. Many milestones have been achieved bringing Surrey Police Service ever closer to assuming operational policing responsibility in Surrey.

“There has been some speculation regarding the transition, including timing,” adds Chief Lipinski. “But the fact is, the transfer of policing responsibility will happen in an orderly, efficient and methodical manner. It is important that this be done right, not fast. As Chief, there is nothing more important to me than the duty of ensuring a safe and successful transfer of responsibility for the sake of both citizens and officers.”

More than two years ago, Surrey City Council passed a motion to move to a locally led police service. A working date (of April 01, 2021) was initially identified with the full knowledge and recognition that once the Police Board and Chief Constable were in place, the target date would likely change as full planning began.

Although Chief Lipinski maintains his goal of initiating some “boots on the ground” in 2021, the full transition will continue to press forward in a systematic, process-driven manner. There are numerous considerations to take into account including the transfer of the command structure during the transition, the deployment model for increasing Surrey Police resources while RCMP resources are systematically reduced and the post-transition command structure. Additional logistical considerations include recruiting and onboarding of sworn officers and new recruits, the transition of City of Surrey staff currently supporting the RCMP, transfer and acquisition of equipment and vehicles, implementation of technology, acquisition of uniforms and much more.

While these are technical, legal, and logistical matters of consideration, there remains other key areas of importance: support for new SPS members, and community engagement and consultation to name a few.

“The complexity of a transition of this nature does not allow for a simple stop/start, but necessitates a respectful, phased-in approach,” explains Deputy Chief Constable Jennifer Hyland, the first of three deputy chiefs to join SPS since January and the officer in charge of the Support Services Bureau. “Part of our approach is to prepare for online townhall sessions with prospective SPS officers, to answer their questions, to support them in their goals and to hear firsthand what ours are.”

SPS remains focused on continued collaboration with all levels of government and the RCMP to solidify the transfer of police service, including investigative files and other operational matters. “It requires deliberate, meticulous and thoughtful planning, and precision in decision making,” adds Deputy Chief Constable Todd Matsumoto, the officer in charge of the Investigative Services Bureau. “This will be my focus as my team works to assume investigative files, both large and small.”

Deputy Chief Mike LeSage, in charge of the Community Policing Bureau agrees. “The citizens of Surrey can be assured that public safety will not be compromised in any way during this transition and once we are operational, we will be focused on the needs of the community, serving with compassion and humility.”

Building the infrastructure of the organization, having the Senior Leadership Team in place, and now cascading the recruiting and hiring to the Staff Sergeant and Sergeant ranks, the Surrey Police Service is well beyond a concept and forging ahead in the building and developing process toward operational readiness.

**See Backgrounder for an outline of the Milestones and Transition Process to date.**

### **Backgrounder and Overview of Milestones of Transition Process**

Within this Backgrounder you will find embedded links to the specific reports, studies and Provincial Public Safety Minister announcement and Fact Sheet pertaining to the transition from RCMP to Surrey Police Service process. Additionally, there is a list, albeit not exhaustive, of milestones achieved by Chief Lipinski since December 2020.

In November 05, 2018, Surrey City Council unanimously passed a [motion](#) to undertake the necessary steps to establish an independent, locally led municipal police service.

In spring the following year, the findings of a [joint study](#) undertaken by the City of Surrey, the City of Vancouver, The Vancouver Police Department and a third-party assessor, PricewaterhouseCoopers, was submitted to the Provincial Government of British Columbia. The study outlined the feasibility of implementing a municipal police service. Based on the findings of that report, the Province gave the City of Surrey the green light to proceed in August 2019.

Additionally, a [Provincial-Municipal Policing Committee chaired by Wally Oppal](#), former Attorney General and Justice of both the Supreme and Appeal Courts of British Columbia, was established to “ensure all key issues and complex details were thoroughly addressed in the city’s transition plan.” This report confirmed a local police service was not only possible but would offer many benefits.

Based on the findings of these two studies, the City of Surrey received [approval](#) in February 2020 to establish a Police Board. The Provincial Government also provided a [Fact Sheet](#) outlining the transition process.

The Surrey Police Board was established via Provincial Order in Council effective July 06,2020. It completed its inaugural meeting on August 06,2020 passing a motion to create the Surrey Police Service. The hiring of a Chief Constable was a priority to move forward in the progression of the building of the Surrey Police Service (SPS). This landmark goal was achieved with the appointment of Chief Constable Norm Lipinski in December 2020.

The [Surrey Police Trilateral Transition Committee](#) ( SPTTC) was formed in keeping with a recommendation put forward in the Provincial-Municipal Policing Committee Report. The purpose of the multi-party committee is to support the implementation of the Surrey Police Service, as the new independent municipal police department serving the City of Surrey. The SPTTC is comprised of the City, the Province of BC, and Government of Canada (represented by the Department of Public Safety) with input from the RCMP and Chief Constable of the Surrey Police Service. The SPTTC is working collaboratively to ensure an orderly, efficient and timely transition of police service.

**SPS Transition Milestones (December 2020 – March 2021)**

1. created a draft organizational structure that will ensure a community responsive police service
2. appointment of three Deputy Chief Constables and recruitment and hiring of the senior leadership team
3. developing a Deployment Model for the transitional period from RCMP to Surrey Police Service operations in collaboration with all three levels of government and police partners through the Surrey Police Trilateral Transition Committee (SPTTC)
4. secured approval by RCMP National Police Services in Ottawa for Surrey Police Service as a Category 1 Police Agency with access to mandatory federal systems - this includes Canadian Police Information Center (CPIC)
5. Organizational Policy identified and moving through approval process
6. in conjunction with the Police Board, organizational Vision, Mission and Values were drafted in preparation for community consultation on the SPS Strategic Plan
7. signed Successorship Agreement which provides opportunity for City of Surrey Staff currently supporting the RCMP to transition to positions with the SPS
8. established terms and conditions for sworn officers (salaries & benefits and pension)
9. design of Crest that has been sent for Royal Assent
10. police vehicle decal in design stage

Sharlene Brooks  
Surrey Police Service  
Communications and Public Affairs  
C. 604.349.6985