



April 6 2021

Honourable Kaycee Madu  
Minister of Justice and Solicitor General  
424 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Madu,

**Re: Alberta Provincial Police Service Transition Study**

On behalf of Town of Didsbury Council, I am writing to advise you of our Council's ongoing support for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) as our province's police force of choice. As well, please know that our Council opposes the creation of an Alberta provincial service to replace the RCMP.

In listening to and reviewing the presentations from the recent AUMA/RMA Policing Summit in February of 2021, the opening presentation by you, our Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, spoke of "citizens demanding democratic, community-based policing, a renewed commitment to improving policing in the province, and the need for police to work with community partners and citizens to ensure effective community policing." Minister Madu, I am pleased to say that our community has democratic, community-based policing, our detachment meets with us regularly as part of their commitment to optimal two-way communication that invites, welcomes, and listens to our input, and our detachment also works with our municipality and our citizens as community partners. Your comment on your "Why Now" PowerPoint slide at the Summit references the "impact of George Floyd's death and public outcry," an American policing situation, "calls to defund the police," which to many means to add funds to social supports in policing situations, and "concerns of systemic racism," an issue our entire country continues to work to address and resolve. We believe there is no support shown that an Alberta police service would solve any of these issues any more effectively than the RCMP.

On your "Reforming Police - What are we doing now" slide presentation, I offer the following observations:

Improve Public Trust in Policing: We believe there is trust in our municipality and that it is not lost and/or diminishing.

Modern Governance Framework: The RCMP presentation by Deputy Commissioner was excellent; the RCMP present an impressive modern governance framework that constantly evolves with changing times, again displayed in our community.

Effective Police Complaints Process for Alberta: We all constantly work on better complaint processes, including the provincial government and our local municipal government here in Didsbury. The RCMP presentation displayed information about (and Didsbury experiences and is part of these) annual performance plans, community/detachment commander relationships, community reporting templates, and community policing advisory committees. We believe that working with the RCMP as the Alberta police force of choice is more likely to succeed than setting up yet another entity who will have to build from scratch, is costing millions to explore, and will cost hundreds of millions more to implement.



Improve relationship with Indigenous Peoples: This is an important and prioritized initiative across our country, not just in our province, and, again, the RCMP are most likely to succeed with the current initiatives they have underway in their system that display their commitment to improving relationships throughout the communities they serve.

Direct consultation with municipalities regarding the creation of an APPS has been limited. PwC's Phases, Activities, and Timelines indicate there have been envisioning workshops and interviews from October 12 through December 18, 2020. Of note our community was not invited to participate (and we have had an RCMP detachment in our town for 25+ years) and, in speaking with colleagues in our region (who have also had RCMP detachments in their towns for many years), I have heard no one indicate they participated in these workshops and interviews. If municipalities who are served by RCMP detachments are excluded from this conversation, valuable information and feedback is left unheard from affected municipalities.

The Policing Transition Study being undertaken by our province is in response to the Fair Deal Panel's (FDP) recommendation #14: Create an APS to replace RCMP. The FDP reported that 68.5% of respondents were from Calgary and Edmonton regions. Calgary and Edmonton have their own police services, which should be considered when studying the transition from the RCMP. Another FDP finding was that only 35% of respondents supported the idea of creating an APS.

Finally, in the Alberta Police Federation survey from October of 2020, it was found that "replacing the RCMP is viewed as a least helpful measure tested to improve Alberta's place in Canada." Only 8% say replacing the RCMP helps a lot, only 6% support replacing the RCMP, 81% of Albertans served by RCMP are satisfied with the service they receive, and 70% of Albertans oppose replacing the RCMP with an expensive new provincial police service.

There is so much convincing support for the RCMP in Alberta, and, with the strong and effective RCMP that serve us so well in Alberta, our Council supports the programs, initiatives, and progress of the RCMP in meeting our community's policing demands. I again reiterate our Council's support for the RCMP remaining as Alberta's police force of choice.

On behalf of Council,

Yours truly,

Rhonda Hunter  
Mayor

Cc: Nathan Cooper, MLA Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills  
Town of Didsbury Council