



**VPD STRATEGIC PLAN 2022–2026**

## **Serving the Community**

Effective community engagement is essential to building positive relationships and mutual trust with the community. These elements are essential to successfully serve the community and ensure public safety through transformative policing practices.

### *Police Accountability*

Subsequent to several high-profile events in the United States, police world-wide have come under greater public scrutiny. There have been increased demands for enhanced accountability and transparency, which are important to ensuring public trust. Long-standing systemic and institutional issues that create socio-economic disadvantages and barriers for certain groups, such as discrimination and poverty, can lead to more situations or behaviours that lead to police contacts. The VPD recognizes and acknowledges the historical role and negative impact that the criminal justice system has had on Indigenous Peoples and other diverse groups. Although significant strides have been made in building relationships, reconciliation work and efforts to decolonize need to continue.

### *Relationships and Trust with Diverse and Equity Deserving Groups*

Through an intersectional and equity lens, the VPD will work to strengthen relationships and trust with Vancouver's diverse and equity deserving groups including Indigenous Peoples, Black communities, people of colour, other ethnic groups, 2SLGBTQ+, and recent immigrants. The VPD will build upon the myriad of outreach programs and efforts it undertakes to holistically engage diverse communities, which includes a dedicated Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Relations Section, full-time community liaison positions, an Indigenous Advisory Committee, an African Descent VPD Advisory Committee, and recruiting that is reflective of the entire community. To further promote cultural awareness and anti-racism, VPD members will receive enhanced training in cultural sensitivity and trauma-informed policing.

### *Engaging and Educating the Public*

The VPD will also continue to engage and educate the general public, neighbourhood groups, and vulnerable populations such as youth and older adults. Popular role-modelling programs and important personal safety initiatives will remain a priority for the VPD to prevent victimization among other positive outcomes such as deterring at-risk youth from engaging in gangs or criminal activity. Leveraging traditional and social media, the VPD will continue to explore innovative methods to deliver public safety and crime prevention information to the public. Continued participation in community events will allow the VPD to further interact and participate in direct dialogue with the public, continually gaining a better understanding of the issues that matter most to the people we serve.

## **Community Safety**

The VPD will continue to address crime and public safety issues through a visible and professional presence in the community in order to protect people, businesses, and property. Community safety continues to be threatened while police resources are challenged by increases in serious violent crimes, incidents related to gang conflict, hate crimes, and ongoing property crime concerns. Unprecedented police pressures are further compounded by increasingly complex investigations, downloading of costs from other levels of government, and a more stringent regulatory and oversight environment.

### *Violent Crime*

Violent crime is the most devastating form of crime, and there is growing concern of hate-based violence perpetuated against various groups, including women, youth, older adults, people of diverse backgrounds, newcomers, and the 2SLGBTQ+ community. The VPD will continue to devise strategies to prevent and fight all forms of violent crime, including leveraging technology to target high-risk violent offenders, child luring predators and human traffickers. Community outreach activities such as the delivery of personal safety workshops will continue to be carried out to prevent and deter violence.

### *Gang Violence*

Public safety continues to be impacted by a violent gang conflict characterized by brazen acts in public settings involving firearms. In collaboration with other agencies and the community, the VPD will target those gang members who pose the greatest and most immediate risk to public safety through multi-faceted enforcement, investigative, and analytical activities.

### *Property and Cyber Crime*

While total property crime continues to be under-reported, there is also growing community concern over break-ins to businesses, violent thefts, mischiefs, and financial crimes. Businesses in particular have expressed frustration over aggressive offenders repeatedly breaking-in or shoplifting. To address these ongoing crime concerns and to improve reporting and police response, the VPD will continue to work with the community and its partners to engage in proactive and innovative strategies which include robust public education campaigns. Prolific offenders will be monitored through a number of investigative techniques and accountability measures. Furthermore, the VPD will expand the capacity and capability of its cyber and financial crime units to deal with the ongoing proliferation of frauds facilitated by technology.

## **Community Well-Being**

Policing is increasingly complex as the VPD continues to face broader social issues such as mental health incidents, protests, and motor vehicle collisions that have a significant impact on public safety and community well-being.

### *Upstream Drivers*

The VPD has long supported innovative solutions to social issues that intersect with law enforcement. The VPD will continue to work with other public health and safety leaders using a multi-faceted and integrated approach in responding to mental health and substance use issues, sex work, and homelessness. The VPD will also continue to work closely with health care partners to address service gaps in the system.

### *Opioid Crisis*

The opioid crisis remains a major concern for all members of the community with illicit drug toxicity claiming thousands of lives each year in British Columbia. In addition to targeting drug traffickers who sell tainted drugs, the VPD will engage in proactive prevention and education efforts. The VPD will also support people living with substance use issues by continuing to advocate for harm reduction and treatment solutions such as treatment on demand, safe supply and opioid replacement therapies, and the decriminalization of drug possession for personal use within a responsible framework.

### *Street Disorder*

The VPD will continue to work with the community and its partners to regularly identify and address other social disorder issues and low-level crime that affect public safety and quality of life. This includes reducing the impact of alcohol and drug use in public settings, addressing encampments, as well as mobilizing volunteers to prevent and detect crime and disorder issues in their local communities. Further, the VPD will continue to develop proactive strategies to safely manage the increasing number of high profile demonstrations taking place in Vancouver.

### *Road Safety*

Ongoing road safety campaigns and data-led enforcement efforts will continue to combat unsafe road behaviour such as distracted driving, speeding, and impaired driving.

## **Supporting Our People**

The VPD remains committed to fully supporting our people through healthy work environments, effective employee engagement and relations, enhanced training, and other opportunities for personal and professional development. Our sworn officers and civilian professionals are our most important and valued resources, and need to be healthy, resilient, well-trained, and supported as they continue to provide excellent service to the public.

### *Communication*

Policing is a demanding, high profile profession where the actions and split-second decisions of officers are highly scrutinized in the public eye. Accordingly, implementing clear, far-reaching, and sustained internal and external communication strategies is crucial to supporting our people and to maintaining positive employee well-being.

### *Health and Wellness*

It is well recognized that demanding police work, and particularly exposure to difficult and challenging situations and circumstances, can impact our members' physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and familial health and wellness. To further help staff manage stress both at work and at home, the VPD is committed to expanding upon a robust employee health and wellness program. Initiatives include mental resiliency training and an early warning intervention system, mental health support and trauma debrief sessions with psychologists and peer support teams, on-site fitness facilities and therapists, periodic medical examinations, and other wellness considerations.

### *Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Work Environments*

The VPD is committed to nurturing and maintaining equitable, diverse, and inclusive work environments, between employees as well as when serving or engaging with the community. The VPD will continue to take an active role in working to continuously challenge biases, confront workplace harassment, and empower people to speak up when they witness barriers to equity and inclusion.

### *Employee Growth and Development*

Comprehensive and adaptive human resource services will ensure equitable access to training and other professional staff development opportunities and will enhance equitable promotional and transfer processes, ensuring that future staffing needs, and changes in assignments are met.

## Strategic Considerations

*Serving the Community* is at the core of the VPD's five year plan, as strong relationships and overall public trust is crucial to its success. Effective community engagement is interconnected with the three other Strategic Goals of *Community Safety*, *Community Well-being*, and *Supporting Our People*.

Through community engagement and with public trust, the VPD is better positioned to support its people who in turn are better able to effectively address crime and public safety issues as well as enhance community well-being. A thriving and safe community is more likely to trust and productively engage with the police.

To work towards achieving the four Strategic Goals, there are four key Strategic Considerations that serve as necessary support functions: *Resourcing*, *Innovation*, *Partnerships*, and *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*.

Sufficient resourcing includes the necessary staffing levels, facilities, and equipment required to effectively deliver all police services including bolstering officer visibility and the VPD's community presence. The VPD will also continue to deliver innovative programming as well as keep pace with changes in technology and social media usage and with its commitment to maximizing efficiencies and fiscal management. Working collaboratively with partners is essential to effectively address social issues that impact public safety and to tackle local and regional crime issues in an integrated cost effective manner. The principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion guide the VPD's ability to create positive, equitable, and respectful work environments and to shape an inclusive workforce that is reflective of our diverse community. These principles will also help the VPD better work towards addressing decolonization, systemic barriers, societal inequities, and all forms of bias in order to better serve the community and further build trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples and other diverse groups.

The four Strategic Considerations are important for the organization to operate efficiently and for VPD members to effectively perform their duties. As such, these Considerations are embedded in everything the VPD does and will therefore form essential aspects of strategies and activities that will be identified and undertaken over the next five years in relation to each of the VPD's four Strategic Goals.

This plan is a fluid document that can be adapted over the next five years as public safety priorities change, or if the needs of the community change. For instance, the Special Committee on Reforming the Policing Act promises to bring forward recommendations and other developments that necessitate changes to policing practices across British Columbia. The VPD will be responsive to any required strategic changes, through the Annual Business Plans, ensuring that the Strategic Plan remains reflective of the values of the community.

### **List of Community Partners that Responded to Strategic Planning Letter**

- BC Housing
- BC Muslim Association
- Chinese Community Policing Centre
- City of Vancouver Coordinator of the Business Improvement Association Program
- Collingwood Business Improvement Association
- Collingwood Community Policing Centre
- First United Church
- Italian Day Festival Society
- John Howard Society
- Means of Production (a small business located on Commercial Drive)
- MOSAIC
- Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC
- Punjabi Market Group
- South Granville Business Improvement Association
- Union Gospel Mission
- Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter
- West End Business Improvement Association

### **List of Community Groups that DIIRS Consulted With**

- Aboriginal Community Career and Employment Counselling Services Society
- Aboriginal Front Door Society
- Aboriginal Mother Centre Society
- African Descent VPD Advisory Committee
- BC Muslim Association
- City of Vancouver 2SLGBTQ+ Committee
- Directions Youth Services
- Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia
- Indian Residential School Survivors Society
- Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver
- Musqueam Indian Band
- Pacific Association of First Nations Women
- Pulling Together Canoe Society
- Saa-Ust Centre
- Settlement Workers in Schools
- SisterWatch
- Squamish Nation
- SUCCESS
- Transformative Justice
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation
- Various agencies representing the Urban Indigenous Community
- VPD ARC Youth Program
- VPD Indigenous Advisory Committee
- VPD Indigenous Cadet Program
- Wavefront Accessibility Groups