

December 9, 2024

Rick Byers, M.P.P.  
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound  
105 – 345 8th Street East  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 1L3  
[rick.byers@pc.ola.org](mailto:rick.byers@pc.ola.org)

## **Re: Request for Equitable Funding for Municipal Policing**

Dear Mr. Byers,

On behalf of the City of Owen Sound, the Town of Hanover, and the Municipality of West Grey, we would like to raise an important concern about fairness in funding for the provision of municipal policing.

To preserve and promote the safety and well-being of the local community, municipalities are required to fund core policing responsibilities with local tax revenue. The City of Owen Sound, Town of Hanover, and the Municipality of West Grey, along with 41 other municipalities in Ontario have elected to serve their communities with their own police services.

While we appreciate the provincial government's recent decision to provide financial relief to municipalities facing higher costs for policing services provided by the Ontario Provincial Police, we are extremely concerned that municipalities who provide local policing have not received this additional support for providing policing services to our communities.

Recent wage increases awarded to the OPP, including a substantial increase in their last contract, have set a standard that influences wage expectations for all police services in the province, including those in our communities. If we do not provide compensation that keeps pace with the wages paid by the OPP, we risk losing our officers to police services providing higher wages.

Additionally, local police services in Owen Sound, Hanover and West Grey are also dealing with many of the same pressures being experienced by communities that contract the OPP for policing services, including the significant costs associated with the implementation of the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, 2019; the opioid crisis, homelessness and mental health issues; yet we are not receiving the same financial support from the province to manage these rising costs, and have been left to deal with these rising costs on our own. This is simply unfair.

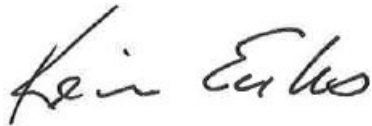
The recent additional provincial funding to municipalities to help offset the higher OPP costs is derived from all taxpayers in the province, including the taxpayers in municipalities who provide their own police services. As such, ratepayers in Owen Sound, Hanover, and West Grey, are supporting not only their own police services, but also the communities that have contracted the OPP to provide police services.

We are asking the Ontario government to provide equitable financial relief to all municipalities, regardless of whether they are policed by the OPP or local police services. All communities face the same challenges, and every municipality deserves fair treatment and support to keep residents safe.

We urge you to advocate for Owen Sound, Hanover, and West Grey, and the other 41 municipalities in the province who provide local police services, to ensure we get the funding we need to continue providing the quality policing our residents deserve.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Kevin Eccles  
Mayor  
Municipality of West Grey



Ian Boddy  
Mayor  
City of Owen Sound



Sue Paterson  
Mayor  
Town of Hanover



Cc: Premier of Ontario  
Ontario Solicitor General  
Police Board Chairs, Owen Sound Police Services, Hanover Police Services, West Grey Police Services  
AMO  
ROMA  
All municipalities in Ontario providing local police services