



**Audit Topic 2 – Report 5 (February, 2016)**



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
PERFORMANCE IN  
MANAGING POLICING  
AGREEMENTS AND  
POLICE BUDGET  
OVERSIGHT**

**City of Williams Lake**

**A Performance Audit carried out by the Auditor General  
for Local Government of British Columbia**



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## MESSAGE FROM THE AUDITOR GENERAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT



**2.5.1** I am pleased to present this performance audit report on the City of Williams Lake's management of its policing agreement and its police budget oversight.

**2.5.2** I want to thank the City of Williams Lake for its cooperation during the performance audit process and the positive response to our findings and recommendations.

**2.5.3** The office of the Auditor General for Local Government was established to strengthen British Columbians' confidence in their local governments' stewardship of public assets and the achievement of value for money in their operations. One of the ways we do this is by conducting performance audits of local government operations.

**2.5.4** Our performance audits are independent, unbiased assessments, carried out in accordance with professional standards. They aim to determine the extent to which the area being examined has been managed with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

**2.5.5** This report outlines our findings in assessing the City of Williams Lake's use of the provisions set out within the policing agreement implemented in 2012 between the City and the Province of British Columbia to improve police services in Williams Lake. This report is not an audit of the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment's operations.

**2.5.6** We have, in a general manner addressed the measurement of policing performance through an AGLG Perspectives booklet aimed at providing tools and advice on policing services performance measurement. Our goal with this is to help all local governments in B.C. assess and – where necessary – improve their oversight of policing services, including police budgets, and their management of police agreements.

**2.5.7** Our hope is that this audit report, along with the AGLG Perspectives booklet, will assist the City of Williams Lake in enhancing its management of its policing agreement and its oversight of the police budget.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Ruth', written in a cursive style.

**Gordon Ruth, FCPA, FCGA**  
Auditor General for Local Government

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**2.5.8** We undertook performance audits on local government management of police agreements and police budget oversight because police service expenditures are a major expense for all local governments in British Columbia. We selected the City of Williams Lake as one of six local governments to audit on this topic because we sought to include a cross-section of local governments with various locations, sizes and other circumstances. This number was later reduced to five with the City of Victoria's implementation of a new policing agreement in April 2014, which effectively surpassed our planned review.

**2.5.9** Policing is a critical, essential service that municipalities must provide and is also one of the most expensive. For these reasons, it is important for municipalities to pay special attention to their oversight of policing agreements and policing costs. By exercising effective oversight over policing, a local government can be satisfied that its police service priorities are aligned with the community's and that the police service has the confidence of residents, through their elected representatives.

**2.5.10** Many of Canada's police forces have faced significant expenditure increases over recent years, rising at a much faster pace than inflation, in spite of declining rates of crime and serious motor vehicle accidents.

**2.5.11** Although policing is a complex enterprise that continues to increase in complexity, it is not immune to concerns about fiscal and program accountability. Local governments have good reason to ask their police

service to justify expenditures of public money, seek efficiencies and provide accurate and timely budget reporting.

**2.5.12** This report does not examine the linkage between policing and crime, whether Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) contract policing or independent policing is the better model, or whether Williams Lake has the right number of police.

## Our Expectations

**2.5.13** We expect a local government to understand and fully utilize its policing agreement and exercise effective budget oversight within its authority.

**2.5.14** This requires that the local government understand and be actively involved in several key areas, consistent with its authority as set out in the 2012 RCMP Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA). This authority is in the following areas:

- Priority-setting;
- Oversight;
- Effectiveness;
- Cost-control; and,
- Performance assessment.

**2.5.15** To accomplish this, a local government must establish sound management practices, including monitoring of budgets, establishing cost containment objectives and setting appropriate policing service levels, while respecting the independence of policing operations.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**2.5.16** Respect for police independence is important. The relationship between government and police is complex and is an important aspect of our democratic system of government. Police forces are not under the direct control of elected officials because they must be able to conduct investigations and maintain order independently, without political or other influence, exercise authority to preserve the peace, protect the public and enforce the law effectively.

**2.5.17** Police independence is balanced against accountability to the public and to civilian authority through the *Police Act*, RCMP policing agreements and other legal frameworks.

### What We Examined

**2.5.18** Our objective was to determine whether the City of Williams Lake effectively and efficiently managed its MPA with the Province, which provides for policing services to be delivered by the RCMP, and conducted appropriate police budget oversight.

**2.5.19** Our assessment covered the period 2010 through 2013. We substantially completed our examination in 2014.

### What We Found

**2.5.20** In the delivery of public services, there is an interrelationship between oversight, accountability and performance management.

**2.5.21** In Williams Lake, we found there were opportunities to enhance this interrelationship by strengthening the City's accountability and performance management. This could be accomplished through greater oversight of policing services and more robust planning and reporting, including ensuring the community has input into policing plans and priorities.

**2.5.22** We also found the City was largely aware of the provisions under the 2012 MPA, with several key exceptions, including the City's authority to request additional information and explanation of RCMP cost items. We understand that, subsequent to our review, the City has increased its knowledge of the MPA and has taken steps to strengthen its oversight which should enhance accountability and performance management.

**2.5.23** We noted that there was a positive working relationship between the City and the RCMP Detachment and a strong community policing effort. Finally, we found there were opportunities for cost recovery and cost containment that the City should explore.

**2.5.24** The following scorecard shows the extent to which the City was aware of and took advantage of key improvements in the 2012 MPA. Overall, while the City was largely aware of the new authorities and provisions available to it through the agreement, it did not utilize some of those authorities relevant to its current operating environment.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXHIBIT 1: Scorecard Demonstrating City of Williams Lake’s Management of 2012 MPUA Enhancements

<p><b>PARTNERSHIP</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Local Government Contract Management Committee was established to address concerns regarding the agreement.</p> <p>The City was not aware of this provision.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A dispute-resolution process is embedded in the 2012 MPUA to allow for local government concerns to be addressed in a timely and systematic manner.</p> <p>The City had not needed to utilize this authority. The City indicated that they have open and frequent communication with the Officer In Charge and are able to ask questions and discuss issues.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The local government has the right to be involved in the selection of the Detachment Commander.</p> <p>There was inconsistent awareness of this authority. The City did not exercise this authority during the audit period, but did exercise it in 2015 when a new Officer In Charge was selected.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Detachment Commander provides reports on complaints against the RCMP.</p> <p>The Officer In Charge provides information to the City when complaints are lodged against RCMP members. This includes the nature of the complaint, but does not identify the member, for confidentiality reasons.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Any request by the local government for an increase or decrease in members must be satisfied within one year.</p> <p>The City was aware of this provision, but did not exercise it during the period covered by the audit.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The local government can request a directed review of the Detachment to ensure the local government is receiving value for money.</p> <p>The City was not aware of this authority.</p>
<p><b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vacancies and changes in rank must be reported to the local government.</p> <p>The Officer In Charge communicates changes to the City’s Chief Administrative Officer.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The local government has input into policing priorities with regular progress reporting from the Detachment Commander.</p> <p>The City was aware of this; however, community input was limited.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Detachment Commander provides the local government with details regarding deployment of members, vacancies and reasons for vacancies, and changes in location/deployment.</p> <p>The City’s Chief Administrative Officer indicated that the Officer In Charge provided information pertaining to changes in staff and/or deployment by sections on the Detachment organizational chart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By watch (Watch A - E)</li> <li>• By unit: GIS, Forensics, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>COST CONTAINMENT</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All cost items that local governments must pay are clearly articulated to improve accountability.</p> <p>During the period covered by the audit, the City was not aware of this provision.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The local government receives early notification of changes that have cost implications.</p> <p>The City’s Chief Administrative Officer indicated that the Officer In Charge informed the City about potential circumstances that may result in higher costs.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Detachment Commander provides a five-year financial plan to local government, updated annually.</p> <p>The “E” Division package that the RCMP provides to the City includes a multi-year financial plan.</p>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### EXHIBIT 2: Summary of Recommendations

ISSUES	RECOMMENDATIONS
Oversight	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The City of Williams Lake should take steps to increase the understanding of municipal staff and Council regarding the 2012 MPA and the authorities it provides them.</li> <li>2. The City of Williams Lake should further enhance its oversight of policing services by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of key players with regard to policing;</li> <li>• Considering the creation of a Council committee or similar structure to review policing-related budgets, costs and outcomes related to the RCMP contract; and,</li> <li>• Developing a set of protocols governing the type and frequency of meetings that deal with policing-related issues.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Planning and Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The City of Williams Lake should develop mechanisms to ensure community input on policing priorities.</li> <li>4. The City of Williams Lake should enhance the performance measurement processes it uses to plan, monitor and report on policing priorities.</li> </ol>
Police Resourcing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The City of Williams Lake should request that the RCMP use the Police Resourcing Model to substantiate the authorized strength that has been assigned to Williams Lake.</li> </ol>
Managing Costs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. The City of Williams Lake should strengthen its management of policing costs by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving its documentation of financial discussions on policing expenditures;</li> <li>• Considering the establishment of a police reserve fund; and,</li> <li>• Working with the Detachment to gain a better understanding of the cost drivers related to overtime and civilian support services and explore cost containment opportunities.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## INTRODUCTION

2.5.25 This report presents the results of a performance audit conducted by the Auditor General for Local Government of British Columbia (AGLG) under the authority of the *Auditor General for Local Government Act*.

2.5.26 We conducted this audit under two of six audit themes outlined in our 2013/14 – 2015/16 Service Plan: “Fiscal and Sustainability Planning, Capacity and Internal Operations” and “Emergency Management and Protective Services.”

2.5.27 Following our identification of audit themes, we selected specific audit topics for audits launched during 2013/14, including the topic of this performance audit: “Local Government Performance in Managing Police Agreements and Police Budget Oversight.”

2.5.28 We identified this topic as a priority because policing is a major expense and a key operation for local governments in British Columbia and effective management of police agreements and oversight of police budgets may provide local governments with opportunities to contain costs.

2.5.29 We selected six local governments to audit on this topic and work began on all six simultaneously. This was later reduced to five with the City of Victoria’s implementation of a new policing agreement in April 2014, which effectively surpassed our planned review.

Section 3(1) and (2) of the *Auditor General for Local Government Act*:

3 (1) The purpose of the auditor general is to conduct performance audits of the operations (design and implementation of the programs, services, policies or systems of a local government and related policies) of local governments in order to provide local governments with objective information and relevant advice that will assist them in their accountability to their communities for the stewardship of public assets and the achievement of value for money in their operations.

3 (2) A performance audit conducted under this Act by the auditor general consists of

(a) a review of the operations of a local government, as the operations relate to a matter or subject specified by the auditor general, to evaluate the extent to which

(i) the operations are undertaken economically, efficiently and effectively,

(ii) financial, human and other resources are used in relation to the operations with due regard to economy and efficiency,

(iii) the operations are effective in achieving their intended results, or

(iv) procedures established by the local government are sufficient for the local government to monitor the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of those operations, and

(b) recommendations to the local government arising from the review referred to in paragraph (a).

**EXHIBIT 3:**  
Excerpt from the *Auditor General for Local Government Act*

## INTRODUCTION

### History of Police Services

**2.5.30** The first police forces in B.C. were established by the colonies of Vancouver Island and B.C. in 1858. When the two colonies united in 1866 and B.C. entered Confederation in 1871, the police force became the British Columbia Constabulary, which was later renamed the British Columbia Provincial Police.

**2.5.31** In 1950, the force was dissolved and the Province entered into a contract with the Government of Canada to have policing services provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The RCMP has been providing contract policing in B.C. since 1950.

**2.5.32** Twelve B.C. municipalities are currently served by independent (non-RCMP) police forces. The remainder receive contract policing through the RCMP.

**Authorized strength** means the maximum number of positions a police department has been authorized to fill. This number includes the number of sworn members and sworn civilian members assigned to a detachment or department. It does not include civilian support staff, bylaw enforcement officers, and auxiliary or reserve police officers.

**Crime rate** means the number of Criminal Code offences reported for every 1,000 permanent residents.

**Criminal Code offences** means property, violent and other crimes (excludes drug and traffic offences based on B.C. Ministry of Justice data). This represents the number of crimes reported to or discovered by police; it does not represent the number of charges laid, prosecutions conducted, information sworn or convictions.

**Case load** means the number of Criminal Code offences divided by the authorized strength of local police. It is considered to be a useful indicator of demand for police services.

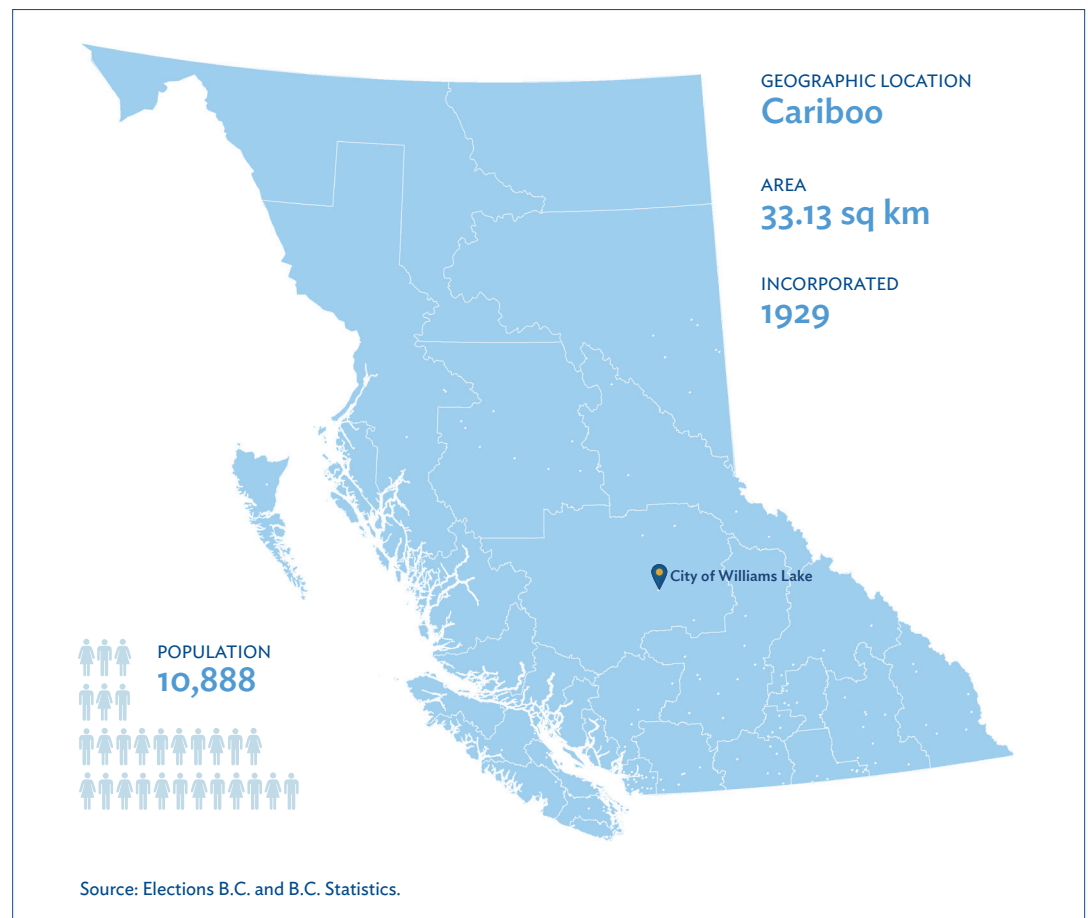
#### EXHIBIT 4: Definitions of Key Terms

## CONTEXT

**2.5.33** The City of Williams Lake is located in the Cariboo Regional District in the central interior of British Columbia. Incorporated in 1929, Williams Lake covers 33 square kilometres. The closest larger communities are Prince George, located 240 kilometres to the north and Kamloops, located 285 kilometres to the south.

**2.5.34** Williams Lake first developed as a community around 1860 during the Cariboo Gold Rush. It later evolved to become a hub for forestry, mining and transportation, with the construction of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, BC Rail and then CN Rail. Today, the top employment sectors in Williams Lake include the service sector, manufacturing, retail trade, forestry and logging, government, construction and transportation / public utilities.

**EXHIBIT 5:**  
Williams Lake Visual Facts



## CONTEXT

2.5.35 Williams Lake’s population was estimated at 10,888 in 2013. As Exhibit 6 shows, the City’s population declined between 2010 and 2013, a period during which B.C.’s overall population increased by 2.6 per cent. The population of the full market area served by the City is approximately 25,120.

2.5.36 There are six First Nations communities within the area served by the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment. RCMP policing services for these communities is provided by four First Nations members jointly funded through the provincial and federal governments.

2.5.37 Exhibit 7 presents the City’s revenues and expenses for 2010 to 2013. The City’s total municipal expenditures decreased slightly over this four-year period. Policing costs – including both the RCMP contract costs and municipal support services costs – increased by 22.3 % during the audit period. Policing costs as a % of total government expenditures increased from 13.0 % in 2010 to 15.9 % in 2013.

**EXHIBIT 6: Population Growth in Williams Lake Relative to B.C.**

TOTAL POPULATION	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE
Williams Lake	11,507	11,094	11,004	10,888	-1.5%
B.C.	4,465,924	4,499,139	4,542,508	4,582,625	2.6%

Source: B.C. Statistics.

**EXHIBIT 7: City of Williams Lake Revenues & Expenses Relative to Policing Costs**

TOTAL REVENUE AND EXPENSES	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE
Local Government Revenue	30,930,128	25,190,076	25,343,781	25,520,358	-17.5%
Local Government Expenditures	24,860,324	24,122,844	24,415,395	24,803,865	-0.2%
Total Policing Cost	3,228,999	3,262,883	3,554,572	3,948,842	22.3%
Policing Costs as % of Total Local Government Expenditures	13.0%	13.5%	14.6%	15.9%	-

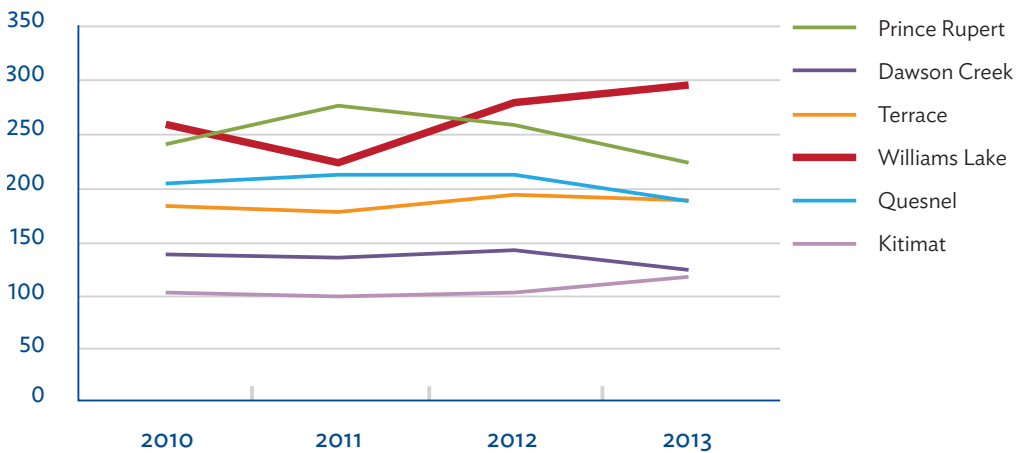
Sources: City of Williams Lake 2010–2013 Annual Reports and Five-Year Financial Plans.



## CONTEXT

2.5.38 In 2012 and 2013, Williams Lake had the highest crime rate among B.C. local governments using RCMP municipal forces. The City’s crime rate in 2013 was 295, almost quadruple the provincial level of 74.5. As shown in Exhibit 8, Williams Lake experienced a steep increase while the other five communities in comparison experienced declining or relatively flat crime rates from 2012 to 2013.

2.5.39 Appendix 1 provides additional contextual details on policing services in B.C. and Williams Lake, including key crime statistics.



**EXHIBIT 8:**  
Crime Rates Comparison

Source: Ministry of Justice, BC Policing Jurisdiction Crime Trends, 2013 – 2012 and 2004 – 2013.

## FINDINGS

Overall, we found that City of Williams Lake staff and Council members were largely aware of enhancements included in the 2012 Municipal Police Unit Agreement and the authorities provided through the MPUA.

**2.5.40** Our findings are based on our review of the City of Williams Lake's management of its policing agreement and police budget oversight. We reviewed the City's systems, practices and policies. We also reviewed relevant documentation and held discussions with key management and staff. Please see the section entitled *ABOUT THE AUDIT*, near the end of this report, for further information on our audit scope and approach.

**2.5.41** Overall, we found that City of Williams Lake staff and Council members were largely aware of enhancements included in the 2012 Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) and the authorities provided to them through the MPUA.

**2.5.42** However, we also found several exceptions where the City lacked awareness and understanding of the MPUA. This could limit the City's ability to maintain effective oversight of policing services and could lead to a lack of accountability where the City's needs are not fully considered.

**2.5.43** We also found the City could strengthen its oversight capabilities by formalizing the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of key players involved in managing the MPUA. Further, the City should consider establishing a police committee to add structure to its oversight and governance of the MPUA.

Key changes in the 2012 Municipal Police Unit Agreement include the following:

### Partnership

- A Local Government Contract Management Committee was established to address concerns regarding the agreement.
- A dispute-resolution process was established.
- The local government has the right to be involved in the selection of the Detachment Commander.

### Accountability

- Vacancies and changes in rank must be reported to the local government.
- The local government has input into policing priorities with regular progress reporting from the Detachment Commander.
- The Detachment Commander provides the local government with details regarding deployment of members, vacancies and reasons for vacancies, and changes in location/deployment.
- The Detachment Commander provides reports on complaints against the RCMP.
- Any request by the local government for an increase or decrease in members must be satisfied within one year.
- The local government can request a directed review of the detachment to ensure the local government is receiving value for money.

### Cost Containment

- All cost items that local governments must pay are clearly articulated to improve accountability.
- The local government receives early notification of changes that have cost implications.
- The Local Government Contract Management Committee reviews any changes to division administration costs prior to approval.
- The Detachment Commander provides a five-year financial plan to local government, updated annually.

**EXHIBIT 9:**  
Changes in the 2012 Policing Agreement

## FINDINGS

There are opportunities to enhance the management of policing services through more robust planning, monitoring and reporting of performance, with the goal of moving toward results-based policing.

**2.5.44** In addition, we found there are opportunities to enhance the management of policing services in Williams Lake through more robust planning, monitoring and reporting of performance, with the goal of moving toward results-based policing.

**2.5.45** We found that the City and the Detachment worked cooperatively and communicated regularly on policing priorities, policing budgets and crime trends.

**2.5.46** We further found that police resource levels for the City were based largely on a minimal staffing approach, and the City, in conjunction with the Detachment, should consider undertaking a more thorough analysis of staffing to provide greater assurance on the size of the Detachment.

**2.5.47** We found that adequate cost monitoring controls were in place, although documentation of financial discussions could be strengthened. The City worked collaboratively with the Detachment on budgeting. During our audit work, City staff became more aware of provisions added to the 2012 MPUA regarding RCMP cost items and subsequently enhanced its cost monitoring practices.

**2.5.48** Finally, the City should consider establishing a police reserve fund, should pay closer attention to policing cost drivers that are within the control of the City and should explore further cost containment opportunities.

## RCMP Contract Framework

**2.5.49** In 2012, the Province reached agreements with the federal government for the RCMP to provide policing services in the province. One agreement is for Canada to provide provincial police services in British Columbia, while the second is for Canada to provide municipal police services. Under the second agreement, municipal police units are assigned to various municipalities. The two agreements each had 20-year terms and included changes to management and financial transparency provisions.

**2.5.50** In order to have the RCMP provide local policing services, a municipality enters into a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) with the Province.

**2.5.51** The 2012 MPUA was designed to ensure a more cooperative and collaborative relationship among the contracted parties. This modernized relationship is reflected in strengthened accountability and enhanced reporting provisions, as well as an expanded role for what was previously called the Contract Advisory Committee, which was transformed in the 2012 agreement into a Provincial-Local Government RCMP Contract Management Committee, which focuses on the effective and efficient provision of policing services across the province.

## FINDINGS

**2.5.52** The provincial and federal governments negotiated the 2012 agreement to include tools for municipalities to better manage their policing services, help monitor and contain policing costs and take a more direct role in policing.

**2.5.53** Under the Municipal Police Service Agreement, the basic cost-sharing arrangement for policing services (see Appendix 1 for details) was similar to that contained in the previous agreement, while new measures were added for municipalities to monitor and plan for costs. Provincial, federal and municipal governments jointly oversee how services are delivered and how costs are managed over time.

**2.5.54** The agreement called for a five-year review to gauge whether the contract is achieving the needs of the communities policed by the RCMP. It also includes a requirement for increased financial reporting from the RCMP to local governments, to encourage better alignment with municipal planning cycles.

## Oversight, Clarity of Roles and Communication

**2.5.55** The 2012 MPUA provided a framework for the relationship between each local government and the RCMP. It is important for the local government's staff to be aware of and understand the changes from the former agreement, as these changes set the tone for a new, modernized partnership based on collaboration.

**2.5.56** A good understanding also increases opportunities for stronger communication and engagement between the local government and the RCMP, higher levels of accountability from the RCMP to the local government and enhanced ability for the local government to understand and monitor costs associated with the RCMP contract.

**2.5.57** It is important to note that the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment is a joint Detachment responsible for federal, provincial and municipal policing. The findings in this report only relate to municipal policing services provided to the City of Williams Lake.

**2.5.58** Many of our findings relate to how well the City was utilizing the authorities and provisions available to it through the enhanced MPUA introduced in 2012. These provisions should provide opportunities for the City to:

- Contribute to the development of policing plans and priorities;

## FINDINGS

While documentation was lacking, we did find that roles and responsibilities were generally understood.

- Request staffing updates;
- Receive timely responses to all staffing requests;
- Request clarity from the RCMP around budgetary considerations;
- Receive information on complaints directed toward the Detachment; and,
- Request a directed review of the Detachment when necessary.

### Oversight

**2.5.59** We found that the City of Williams Lake did not have a complete understanding of the authorities available to local governments under the 2012 MPUA. Nor did the City have a thorough knowledge of key information such as the basis for calculating RCMP payments, or for ensuring community consultation in the setting of policing priorities.

**2.5.60** Essentially, the City continued to exercise oversight in the same manner as it had prior to the signing of the 2012 MPUA: receiving financial and operational information and processing it in a similar fashion to that used in the previous agreement. In addition, policing objectives were established without citizen involvement. As a result, the City was not taking full advantage of its authorities as intended under the agreement.

**2.5.61** Both Council and City staff would benefit from a greater understanding of their authorities under the MPUA. This could be undertaken locally through a review of the provisions of the MPUA, or it could be done with the assistance of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities or the Local

Government Contract Management Committee. This would enable the City to better understand the intricacies of the MPUA and position itself well to utilize the authorities available in the 2012 agreement.

### Clarity of Roles

**2.5.62** Overall, we found that the organizational structure, reporting relationships and roles and responsibilities of key players related to policing in Williams Lake were not clearly documented and were not formalized. The City lacked formal policies to support its governance of policing services. This could limit the City's ability to provide sound oversight, as there were gaps in the accountability relationship between the City and the Detachment.

**2.5.63** However, while documentation was lacking, we did find that roles and responsibilities were generally understood. For example, the Officer In Charge reported to the Mayor and information the Officer In Charge provided to the Mayor and Council was vetted through the City's Chief Administrative Officer, who oversaw the Detachment's municipal support staff. Further, the City's Finance Director oversaw the budget review process, conducted budget-to-actual analysis, reviewed quarterly invoices and variance reports and provided Council with year-over-year budget comparisons.

**2.5.64** It is important for the roles and responsibilities of key participants in policing oversight to be clearly defined in writing and people with specific roles should be required to understand and use the applicable authorities available to the City through the 2012 MPUA.

## FINDINGS

The City and the Detachment worked cooperatively and communicated regularly on policing priorities, policing budgets and crime trends.

**2.5.65** To strengthen its governance and oversight of its policing services in Williams Lake, the City should formally document key roles and responsibilities. This should include the following:

- The City's mandate and operating environment, as they relate to policing;
- Its authorities and responsibilities for strategic planning, priority setting and performance measurement;
- Operational and financial information requirements; and,
- Performance reporting and management.

**2.5.66** We also found other key policing-related players in Williams Lake included:

- The Safer Communities Coordinator, a City employee who managed the city-funded Community Policing Office as well as a ten-member Community Policing Board, which governed the office. The coordinator worked closely with the Detachment's Officer In Charge, while the board issued community policing plans and reports to the Mayor and Council.
- The Leader's Table, a group consisting of the Mayor and community representatives from institutions such as the university, school district, health sector, Chamber of Commerce and other business and community sectors. The group met on a monthly basis to discuss policing and public safety issues. This forum is a good practice.

### Communication

**2.5.67** We found through interviews that the City and the Detachment worked cooperatively and communicated regularly on policing priorities, policing budgets and crime trends. Regular meetings and reporting involved the Officer In Charge, the Safer Communities Coordinator, the Mayor and Council and senior City staff. In addition to these meetings, the City's Chief Administrative Officer and the Officer In Charge indicated that they met informally as needed to discuss any unexpected issue that arose related to policing.

**2.5.68** However, we also found that there are multiple meetings and meetings where no minutes or records are kept. For example, we found there are meetings involving the same individuals where similar information is shared which take place on a bi-weekly basis, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual and annual basis.

**2.5.69** As a result, there may be opportunities to streamline these meetings and improve the structure of communications relating to policing in Williams Lake. The City, working with the Detachment, would benefit from reviewing, clarifying and documenting the frequency of policing-related meetings, their purpose, record keeping and documenting requirements and methods of ensuring follow up on decisions reached at these meetings.

**2.5.70** By establishing protocols for its policing-related meetings, the City could enhance its communication practices and strengthen its governance and oversight of policing, with a

## FINDINGS

# Police committees or similar governance structures can play an integral role in ensuring police accountability.

focus on key financial and operational information to support sound, results-based decisions.

### Need for a Police Committee

**2.5.71** The City of Williams Lake should consider creating a Council committee or similar structure to review policing-related budgets, costs and outcomes related to the RCMP contract. This would assist the City in formalizing its oversight of policing, including reporting relationships and roles and responsibilities related to the management of the RCMP contract.

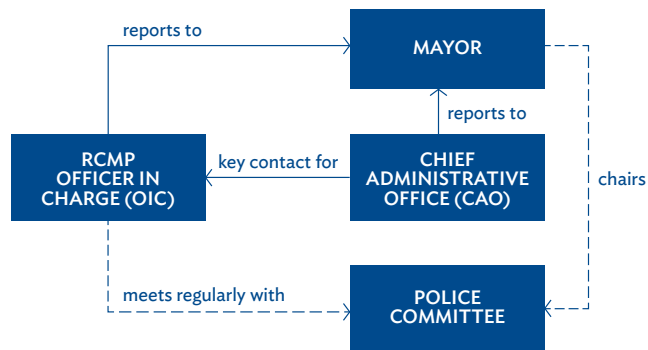
**2.5.72** Such a committee could contribute to the consolidation and strengthening of policing-related meetings. A police committee would also help the City maintain continuity in the face of changes to City Council membership by preserving knowledge and experience on policing oversight.

**2.5.73** Police committees or similar governance structures can play an integral role in ensuring police accountability. In some other communities, police committees discuss municipal policing priorities and review community policing initiatives. Typically, they are responsible for:

- Setting strategic directions and priorities;
- Scrutinizing performance outcomes and financial information;
- Achieving results through community engagement and partnerships; and,
- Ensuring value for money and productivity.

**2.5.74** Exhibit 10 illustrates how a police committee might work in relation to existing positions and responsibilities. Such a committee would need clear Terms of Reference outlining roles and responsibilities related to police operational and financial oversight and a clear requirement that committee members must review and understand the 2012 MPUA. The City should develop an organizational chart, such as the one illustrated below, which clearly demonstrates to the public the accountability relationship between the RCMP and the City.

**EXHIBIT 10: Governance Structure with a Police Committee**



Note: The dotted lines represent AGLG suggestions.

**2.5.75** Across B.C., local governments have taken varying approaches to policing oversight committees, including independent police boards, committees of Council as a whole, sub-committees of Council, audit committees and committees made up of representatives of both Council and community stakeholders such as First Nations groups and local business associations. Additionally, a group of community stakeholders, such as Williams Lake’s Leader’s Table, could serve as advisors to a police committee.

## FINDINGS

Overall, there are opportunities for the City to streamline and align planning and reporting activities and move toward a more results-based approach to managing policing performance.

**2.5.76** These oversight processes would enable greater understanding and insight into policing service delivery and associated risks and would ultimately enhance the City of Williams Lake's oversight capacity.

### Community Policing Plans, Priorities and Services

**2.5.77** The 2012 MPUA provides for the local government to have input into community policing plans and priorities, along with regular reports from the Officer In Charge on deliverables and results achieved.

#### Importance of Local Priority Setting

**2.5.78** It is important for community stakeholders and residents to provide input into policing priorities and feedback on the performance of their police service. Without this, community stakeholders may become disconnected from their police force and key community public safety priorities may not be addressed.

#### Planning, Priority-Setting and Reporting

**2.5.79** We found that the City and the RCMP drafted multiple policing plans, some with objectives and priorities that did not align. In addition, we found reporting of policing activities was heavily focused on statistics without clear links to priorities. Reports typically did not include discussion of the impact of policing initiatives, longer term outcomes or results.

**2.5.80** Overall, there are opportunities for the City to streamline and align planning and reporting activities and move toward a more results-based approach to managing policing performance.

**2.5.81** We also found a range of community policing initiatives in Williams Lake aimed at crime prevention, many of which were carried out using volunteers. However, community input to policing plans and priorities was limited.

**2.5.82** Therefore, the City, working with the Detachment, should develop a mechanism to engage stakeholders and provide regular opportunities for community members to provide input on policing priorities. This is particularly important, given that crime and safety/security was the number one issue raised by City residents through a 2011 citizen survey.

**2.5.83** During the period covered by the audit, the City was involved in the production of five different planning and reporting documents that touched on policing objectives, priorities and areas of focus. Three of these documents were developed on an annual basis.

#### RCMP Departmental Business Plan

**2.5.84** First prepared in 2013, this document was prepared jointly by the City and the Detachment. It documented policing priorities, goals and initiatives and was developed without a process for gathering input from local residents. Subsequent to the period covered by the audit, each year's plan also included a table listing the previous year's accomplishments.



## FINDINGS

### **Annual Performance Plan (APP)**

**2.5.85** This RCMP-mandated plan was prepared by the Detachment and also documented policing priorities, goals and initiatives. Annual Performance Plans were introduced to provide a framework for setting priorities, in conjunction with the local government and residents, and for monitoring results.

**2.5.86** We found that this plan was prepared by the Officer In Charge and the Safer Communities Coordinator, without input from residents. The Officer In Charge presented it to Council and the Chief Administrative Officer for discussion, but we found no written records of what was discussed. Information on the plan was included on the Detachment's website.

**2.5.87** On a quarterly basis, the Officer In Charge presented crime statistics to Council for information and discussion, but this did not include reporting on the status of the priorities and initiatives noted in the Annual Performance Plan.

### **Community Policing Operational Plan**

**2.5.88** Williams Lake's Community Policing Board issued an annual operational plan and year-end report. Prepared by the Safer Communities Coordinator, the plan included programs delivered by 200 community volunteers to help address local safety and security concerns.

**2.5.89** We found the City and the Detachment have built a strong community policing base, providing a range of crime prevention programs staffed by volunteers. Results are monitored and

reported regularly. Volunteerism is an important component of policing as it fosters positive community relationships and strong community partnerships. It is an effective means of ensuring public input into policing activities and it is a measure through which policing costs can be reduced.

**2.5.90** The Community Policing Initiative in Williams Lake is a good practice, which other communities may wish to emulate.

Community policing is a partnership between the police and the community, working together to enhance the community's safety and quality of life.

#### **Mandate:**

1. Promote the ideas of community policing through information exchange and cooperation between the community and the police.
2. Identify and address crime concerns within the communities.
3. Provide support and promote crime prevention programs through education.
4. Develop, promote and assist with ongoing crime prevention projects.
5. Support and assist with resource development.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To facilitate open communication between the citizens of Williams Lake and its police force.
2. To solicit and receive community input into the quality and type of police services required by the community.
3. To participate in the RCMP planning process for the purpose of addressing our community needs.
4. To assist Williams Lake Detachment in identifying and addressing community policing issues.

Source: Adapted from <http://williamslake.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/>, downloaded October 1, 2015.

### **EXHIBIT 11: Williams Lake Community Policing**

## FINDINGS

### ***Integrated Community Sustainability Planning Framework***

**2.5.91** The City launched its *Imagine Our Future* process in 2009, a one-time initiative aimed at engaging residents to help guide community leaders and official community plans over 25 years. The process identified crime and safety as an issue and included a strategy and indicators relating to crime prevention.

**2.5.92** While this was an opportunity for residents to provide input, it did not provide for ongoing or annual engagement with the community. The City told us that the annual RCMP Departmental Business Plan draws on information in this document.

### ***Three-Year Plan (2012-2015 Roadmap)***

**2.5.93** The City produced a three-year ‘road map’ that included one strategic objective relating to community safety and crime reduction initiatives. While the document did not state this explicitly, City staff told us that this was related to the City’s Community Policing Office and Integrated Community Sustainability Planning Framework.

### ***Streamlining and Aligning of Planning and Reporting Documents***

**2.5.94** We found that, while there were some differences in areas of focus in the three planning documents (APP, RCMP Departmental Business Plan and the Three-year Roadmap) that were produced annually, there were also areas of overlap. As a result, there is an opportunity to streamline by consolidating these planning mechanisms.

**2.5.95** In particular, the City should work with the Detachment to better align the departmental business plan with the Annual Performance Plan. For example, if the four areas of focus in the 2013/2014 performance plan were included in the 2013 business plan, priorities would be clearer and more consistent and reporting on progress would be more straightforward.

**2.5.96** We also found that the RCMP reported regularly to Council and residents on a range of police activities and crime rate trends and the City also reported similar information to residents. In some cases, links between the results reported and the City’s and Detachment’s priorities were unclear.

**2.5.97** In addition, the strategic goals, objectives and priorities and the reporting of results could be better aligned. This would enhance accountability by more clearly indicating progress on priorities, how this is linked to Detachment activities and movement toward the City’s longer term corporate goals and objectives.

### ***Performance Measurement and Framework***

**2.5.98** The City has an opportunity to enhance its policing performance measurement by building on existing planning and reporting activities. This is particularly relevant given how performance information is being used increasingly in many jurisdictions’ planning and budgeting processes.

**2.5.99** By developing a more robust and consistent planning, monitoring and reporting framework, the City could strengthen its oversight and accountability of policing services.

## FINDINGS

### A more coordinated performance measurement process could help the City move toward a results-based policing model.

This would also enhance the City’s communication of policing priorities and results with residents and other stakeholders.

**2.5.100** Exhibit 12 represents a visual diagram of a typical performance measurement process that lends itself to a robust performance framework. A more coordinated process, as illustrated by the exhibit, could help the City move toward a results-based policing model where performance measures and targets drive results and are used to inform operational and financial needs. Ultimately, such a model could enhance the City’s role in police oversight and the stewardship of public resources.

- An introduction stating the purpose of the document and its relationship to the other two documents.
- Its priorities and related objectives, including those that are common across documents (for example, the business plan and performance plan should include the same policing priorities).
- Performance measures and targets linked to those objectives.
- A standardized format and schedule for engaging residents and monitoring and reporting on results.

**2.5.102** We note that an established and broadly-accepted set of performance metrics for local governments to use when evaluating their policing services does not exist at this time. This is recognized as a complex topic. Several organizations and government agencies are working to establish such metrics. As new measures are developed and evolved they should be considered as part of the Williams Lake performance measurement process.

**EXHIBIT 12:**  
Performance Measurement Process



**2.5.101** A policing performance framework for the City of Williams Lake could include the three main documents that currently exist: the departmental business plan, Annual Performance Plan and community policing operational plan. Each document could include:

## Police Resource Levels and Mix

**2.5.103** The most significant cost drivers for policing services are the number of employees and labour costs, including salaries and benefits. Because of this, changes to the number of police staff can have the largest single impact on police budgets. However, there are other factors that also influence costs such as individual skill sets and the ratio of civilian employees to regular officers.

## FINDINGS

Determining the most appropriate level of policing is a complex exercise that can have a major bearing on policing costs and effectiveness.

**2.5.104** Prudent assignment of policing resources can have an impact on effectiveness and overall costs. For example, there may be some administrative tasks that can be performed more cost-effectively by support staff than by sworn officers. Ensuring an appropriate number and mix of employees – including sworn officers and other staff – can have an impact on the overall cost and effectiveness of a police service.

### Approaches Used to Determine the Appropriate Police Resource Level

**2.5.105** Every community is unique and as a result, levels of policing differ based on several factors, including geography, demographics, type of crime, community expectations and available resources. An optimal approach would be to carefully consider and utilize some combination of these factors.

**2.5.106** Determining the most appropriate level of policing is a complex exercise that can have a major bearing on policing costs and effectiveness. Exhibit 13 describes six different approaches to determining police resource levels for a community or region.

### EXHIBIT 13: Six Main Methods of Determining Police Resource Levels

**Historical levels/budget room approach** – This incremental approach takes the current level of police resources as the starting point and then adds resources as budgets permit. While it is straightforward, this method does not link level of resources with an analysis of need or police effectiveness and does not relate to any sort of benchmark.

**Per capita approach** – This approach determines an appropriate number of officers per capita based on a comparison with other communities. This method is also straightforward and does relate to a benchmark, but it does not take into account the specific circumstances of the community, police effectiveness or an analysis of needs.

**Minimum staffing approach** – This approach estimates the staffing level necessary to maintain officer safety and provide adequate protection to the public. However, there are no objective standards for determining minimum staffing levels and this approach does not take into account workload differences at different times of the day, week or year. As a result, use of this method could result in excess resources at some times and insufficient resources at others.

**Authorized level approach** – This approach calculates staffing levels based on available budget. While it provides the police agency with control over its allocation of resources, it is not necessarily linked to need or workload considerations and can result in the establishment of an artificial benchmark similar to the historical levels/budget room approach.

**Workload-based approach** – This approach uses actual demand-for-service data to help determine appropriate staffing levels. Using a computer model, it takes information on calls for service, response times, performance objectives and other data to estimate the appropriate level of staffing. More complex than other methods, it is most useful in determining scheduling and has difficulty accounting for the complexity of larger urban communities.

**Coverage-based approach** – This approach uses geographic coverage and targeted response times within the area to guide the number of officers hired and the number deployed to particular areas. It is well suited to more disparate rural areas where travel time to respond to calls may vary widely due to distance. Since it is based on response time, it is subjective, as there are no benchmarks for the appropriate number of police per square kilometer or desired response times

## FINDINGS

### Ensuring Appropriate Policing Levels

**2.5.107** Planning for the appropriate level of staffing is important, given the impact staffing can have on policing effectiveness and on overall expenses. Article 16.0 of the MPUA includes a paragraph that directs the Officer In Charge and the Chief Executive Officer (the Mayor) to exchange information on the number of positions required for the Detachment, as a component of annual and multi-year financial planning.

**2.5.108** Williams Lake is a hub city in B.C.'s interior with distinctive geographic and socio-economic characteristics that are seen to contribute to its high crime rate and policing challenges. The key players we interviewed acknowledged the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment was understaffed.

**2.5.109** We found through interviews that Williams Lake faces significant challenges related to providing adequate levels of policing, despite the fact that the City has a higher-than-average investment in police resources. In response to this situation, the RCMP "E" Division initiated a staffing analysis in Williams Lake in 2010 to help determine the appropriate level of resourcing. However, a formal report on this analysis was never completed.

**2.5.110** Subsequent to this, the Officer In Charge submitted requests to Council to approve increases in authorized strength and support staff as part of the Detachment's 2013 business plan. City staff told us this request has not been acted on, as Council recommended that community buy-in was needed to confirm that residents would support an increase in municipal RCMP members and the resulting increase in property taxes. To date, such community consultation has not been initiated by the City.

**2.5.111** As shown in Exhibit 14, the authorized strength for the portion of the Williams Lake Detachment assigned to police the City of Williams Lake remained at 24 throughout the period covered by the audit. During this time, the population of Williams Lake declined slightly, resulting in a small decrease in population per authorized strength.

**EXHIBIT 14: Population per Authorized Strength**

WILLIAMS LAKE MUNICIPALITY	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE
Authorized Strength	24	24	24	24	0.0%
Population per Authorized Strength	461	462	459	454	-1.5%

Source: Police Resources in B.C.

## FINDINGS

The City, in conjunction with the Detachment, should consider using a more robust methodology to determine the appropriate number of officers.

**2.5.112** We observed that the City’s population per police officer was on par with five other communities in B.C. with relatively similar populations. This is demonstrated in Exhibit 15.

**2.5.113** We found that in the absence of any clear, documented rationale supporting the size of the Detachment during the period covered by the audit, the City was using the minimum staffing approach largely based on budgetary considerations to determine its size. We also found that, while the Officer In Charge indicated a need for additional police officers to address Williams Lake’s policing needs aside from core policing, there was no formal business case supporting an increase.

**2.5.114** The City, in conjunction with the Detachment, should consider using a more robust methodology to determine the appropriate number of officers. This should include an analysis of key factors such as workload, crime levels and community characteristics, in addition to the budget. The RCMP’s Police Resourcing Model, described below, may offer an opportunity for the City to gain assurance around the size of the Detachment.

### Police Resourcing Model

**2.5.115** In addition to the six methods outlined earlier in Exhibit 13, the RCMP’s Police Resourcing Model may be an appropriate tool to determine policing levels for Williams Lake. The model is a workload-based approach to determining policing levels, developed by the RCMP to address some of the challenges in

**EXHIBIT 15: Per Capita Policing Strength Comparison**

CITY	2013 POPULATION	2013 AUTHORIZED STRENGTH	2013 POPULATION PER OFFICER
Prince Rupert	12,342	36	343
Dawson Creek	12,285	25	491
Terrace	11,550	25	462
<b>Williams Lake</b>	<b>10,888</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>454</b>
Quesnel	9,935	21	473
Kitimat	8,395	15	560
<b>Average</b>	<b>10,899</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>464</b>

Source: Police Resources in B.C.

determining the police resources needed in a particular jurisdiction.

**2.5.116** The model uses historical data available from RCMP information systems on initial response times, follow-up, court work and case disposition activities. By factoring in future population forecasts, it can provide a recommended number of uniformed patrol officers for a given community, as well as levels of plain-clothes officers and support staff. This information can help a local government identify key cost drivers and plan for overall budget levels.

**2.5.117** The model is typically used in communities with relatively straightforward police resource needs. It is not generally used for communities with populations above 15,000.

## FINDINGS

We found the City had relatively high per capita policing costs.

**2.5.118** The model was first used in British Columbia in 2007. Until 2013, there was only one RCMP analyst in the province trained to use the model, but there are now five and it is being used to assist with determining staffing levels for several B.C. communities. Since the RCMP has been using the model for more than five years, there should be sufficient data to assess its results.

**2.5.119** The City should work with the Detachment to assess these results and gauge the usefulness of the model to help determine the appropriate size of the Williams Lake Detachment.

### Vacancy Rates

**2.5.120** Under the MPPUA, the Detachment is expected to provide the City with information on vacancy rates and reasons for vacancies. Data on vacancies is important as it can be used to help determine the right size of the Detachment and in budget forecasting for member salaries and benefits.

**2.5.121** The Williams Lake RCMP Detachment operated at or close to authorized strength over the period covered by the audit, demonstrating sound management of the full complement of officers. The resulting vacancy rate ranged from 0.9 to 2.8 per cent and averaged 1.5 per cent during the four-year period. This was lower than the 2013 national average of 3.4 per cent.

## Managing Policing Costs

**2.5.122** In comparison with five other communities, we found the City had relatively high per capita policing costs. Based on the Municipal Police Unit Agreement and external factors that were relevant to Williams Lake, there are a number of policing cost drivers that the City and the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment should consider on an ongoing basis.

**2.5.123** Some cost drivers, which have contributed to escalating policing costs, were beyond the control of the City:

- Legislative and court-related requirements that make police processes more complicated and time-consuming;
- Inflation in police salaries and benefits;
- Federal decisions, such as increasing the employer portion of pensions and changes to the rules covering severance allowances;
- Division administration;
- National programs;
- Information management systems, including PRIME; and
- Facility and equipment requirements in support of policing delivery.

**2.5.124** Policing-related cost drivers over which the City may have some control included:

- The number of members and, as a result, the costs of salaries and benefits;
- Support services costs;

## FINDINGS

The City could pay closer attention to cost drivers such as the use of overtime, civilian support costs and costs associated with Detachment accommodation in order to maximize the resources.

- The timing (and therefore the timing of the associated costs) of RCMP members transferred to and out of the Detachment;
- The replacement of, and additions to, the fleet of vehicles;
- Some overtime costs;
- Management (and therefore associated costs) of unplanned leaves such as sick time and maternity/paternity leave.

**2.5.125** Overall, we found the City worked collaboratively with the Detachment on budgeting and followed adequate processes for monitoring financial results. During the audit, City staff told us they had become more aware of the provision added to the 2012 MPUA regarding RCMP cost items and subsequently enhanced their cost monitoring practices.

**2.5.126** We also found the City should consider establishing a policing reserve fund. The City could also pay closer attention to cost drivers such as the use of overtime, civilian support costs

and costs associated with Detachment accommodation in order to maximize the resources available for police services.

### Budget Process

**2.5.127** The MPUA provides the City with the authority to obtain and discuss detailed information on resources required to support annual and multi-year financial planning.

**2.5.128** We found that the City worked with the Detachment to review the annual budget and the five-year forecast and the process leading to the overall police budget approval incorporated public input as set forth in the *Community Charter*.

**2.5.129** Given the increasing costs of policing in Williams Lake (see Exhibit 16), resource and budgetary planning is critical to ensure that the City meets safety and security priorities while containing policing costs.

**EXHIBIT 16:**  
Policing Costs in Williams Lake

POLICING COST	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE
Total Policing Cost ^	\$ 3,228,999	\$ 3,262,883	\$ 3,554,572	\$ 3,948,842	22.3%
Population	11,057	11,094	11,004	10,888	-1.5%
Total Policing Cost per Capita	\$ 292	\$ 294	\$ 323	\$ 363	24.2%
Consumer Price Index Growth (B.C.)	113.80	116.50	117.80	117.70	3.4%

^ Total policing costs include RCMP contract costs and municipal support services costs.



## FINDINGS

### Meeting minutes are integral to sound oversight.

**2.5.130** In May / June of each year, the RCMP “E” Division sent the City a five-year forecast of the cost of contracted services, based on the number of members that had been authorized by Council. This budget indicated the annual amounts the RCMP expected to charge the City and followed the federal government’s fiscal year ending on March 31.

**2.5.131** The RCMP provided the City with budgetary information on specific cost drivers, notes and assumptions regarding the five-year forecast, a summary at the end of that forecast and additional basic information, such as firearms cost estimates.

**2.5.132** The City’s Finance Director presented the budget to Council, drawing attention to any costs that were new or had increased from the previous year and declared in a letter that funds were available to cover the identified costs. The Chief Administrative Officer would bring any extraordinary budget items forward to Council and the Officer In Charge would be available to discuss the budget with Council.

**2.5.133** The City’s policing budget included the RCMP contract cost, which accounted for the majority of that budget, expenditures on civilian support services and the Safer Community Program. This budget followed the City’s fiscal year end of December 31 and reflected the resources the City had allocated to overall policing services. It was approved by Council as part of the City’s annual five-year financial plan, as required by the *Community Charter*.

**2.5.134** City staff told us that the City invited community members to these annual budget discussion meetings, although there was a low response rate.

#### Cost Monitoring

**2.5.135** We found that the Officer In Charge monitored the budget-to-actual variance of RCMP contract costs on a monthly basis and provided Council with regular oral updates on variances. No minutes were kept of these meetings, so it is unclear what was discussed or what decisions were made. Meeting minutes are integral to sound oversight and help to ensure accountability and the City should take steps to ensure minutes of meetings are properly recorded.

**2.5.136** The Officer In Charge presented Council with budget-to-actual variance analysis twice per year. In our interviews, we learned that, during these meetings, Council focused primarily on the bottom line and associated tax implications. Council meeting minutes from these sessions were available to the public on the City’s website. However, references to these discussions in the minutes were limited to a note indicating that the topic was discussed; a more detailed record of the discussions was not included. Again, the City should ensure that records of meeting details are properly recorded. City staff told us that, following the period covered by the audit, the City improved its meeting documentation practices.

## FINDINGS

The City's actual annual RCMP contract costs were under budget in all four years covered by this audit.

**2.5.137** The City's Finance Director and Chief Administrative Officer monitored quarterly invoices. However, they told us that they felt they did not have the right to question the invoices. During our audit, City staff became aware of the provision added to the 2012 MPUA that required the RCMP to clearly articulate all cost items the City had to pay. Since then, the City has been more proactive in reviewing quarterly invoices and annual reconciliations with the Detachment and "E" Division.

### **RCMP Contract Costs**

**2.5.138** A summary of the City's RCMP contract cost is presented below. Direct policing costs include expenses on payroll, training, travel, communications and legal services, leasing, equipment and supplies. Indirect policing costs include pensions, division administration, recruitment, and training expenses. The RCMP indirect costs are the main category of policing costs that are generally beyond the City's control.

**2.5.139** The City's actual RCMP policing costs (excluding municipal support services costs) increased from \$2.52 million in 2010/11 to \$2.95 million in 2013/14 (see Exhibit 17). This represents an increase of 17 per cent over the four-year period, an average increase of 5.7 per cent per year. This is comparable with other municipalities using RCMP services that we have reviewed.

**2.5.140** As shown in Exhibit 17, the City's actual annual RCMP contract costs were under budget in all four years covered by this audit. Surpluses in the regular strength pay budget item were the major contributing factor.

## FINDINGS

EXHIBIT 17: City of Williams Lake RCMP Policing Costs Budget-to-Actual

RCMP CONTRACT	2010/11			2011/12		
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE
Regular Strength Pay	\$ 3,249,600	\$ 3,161,045	\$ 88,555	\$ 3,360,000	\$ 3,163,434	\$ 196,566
Overtime	\$ 179,000	\$ 143,131	\$ 35,869	\$ 181,685	\$ 167,547	\$ 14,138
<b>Total Direct &amp; Indirect Costs @ 100%</b>	<b>\$ 3,428,600</b>	<b>\$ 3,304,176</b>	<b>\$ 124,424</b>	<b>\$ 3,541,685</b>	<b>\$ 3,330,981</b>	<b>\$ 210,704</b>
<b>Total Direct &amp; Indirect Costs @ 70%</b>	<b>\$ 2,400,020</b>	<b>\$ 2,312,923</b>	<b>\$ 87,097</b>	<b>\$ 2,479,180</b>	<b>\$ 2,331,687</b>	<b>\$ 147,493</b>
Accommodation @ 100%	\$ 205,945	\$ 212,014	(\$ 6,069)	\$ 226,678	\$ 203,785	\$ 22,893
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$ 2,605,965</b>	<b>\$ 2,524,937</b>	<b>\$ 81,028</b>	<b>\$ 2,705,858</b>	<b>\$ 2,535,472</b>	<b>\$ 170,386</b>
	2012/13			2013/14		
Regular Strength pay	\$ 3,537,755	\$ 3,394,600	\$ 143,155	\$ 3,827,520	\$ 3,503,596	\$ 323,924
Overtime	\$ 184,410	\$ 199,702	(\$ 15,292)	\$ 187,644	\$ 206,173	(\$ 18,529)
<b>Total Direct &amp; Indirect Costs @ 100%</b>	<b>\$ 3,722,165</b>	<b>\$ 3,594,301</b>	<b>\$ 127,864</b>	<b>\$ 4,015,164</b>	<b>\$ 3,709,769</b>	<b>\$ 305,395</b>
<b>Total Direct &amp; Indirect Costs @ 70%</b>	<b>\$ 2,605,516</b>	<b>\$ 2,516,011</b>	<b>\$ 89,505</b>	<b>\$ 2,810,615</b>	<b>\$ 2,596,838</b>	<b>\$ 213,777</b>
Accommodation @ 100%	\$ 226,678	\$ 272,021	(\$ 45,343)	\$ 357,640	\$ 356,672	\$ 968
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$ 2,832,194</b>	<b>\$ 2,788,032</b>	<b>\$ 44,162</b>	<b>\$ 3,168,255</b>	<b>\$ 2,953,510</b>	<b>\$ 214,745</b>

Source: RCMP statements

## FINDINGS

The cumulative surplus during the period covered by the audit totalled \$438,248 and the City should consider moving these annual surpluses into a police reserve fund.

### RCMP Overtime

**2.5.141** Overtime costs are an important area to monitor. In policing, the amount of overtime that may be required cannot be accurately forecasted. Overtime is mainly influenced by criminal events and court scheduling, which are beyond the control of the City and the RCMP, although overtime can also be driven by vacancy rates and shift schedule issues, which are more controllable.

**2.5.142** As indicated in Exhibit 18, actual overtime costs were under budget in the first two years covered by this audit and over budget in the last two years. We were advised that the staffing situation in Williams Lake, in particular the high number of new recruits and the subsequent need for senior members to be available on overtime callout, was a main driver of overtime. Given the significance of these increasing costs, the City should request explanations from the Detachment around overtime cost drivers and steps should be taken to reduce overtime costs where possible.

### Total Policing Costs

**2.5.143** Total policing costs include both the RCMP contract cost and municipal expenses covering support services and prisoner keeping.

**2.5.144** As shown in Exhibit 19, the City’s total policing costs increased by 22 per cent during the period covered by this audit. This is similar to other municipalities using RCMP services that we reviewed. In three out of the four years covered by this audit, the City’s total policing costs were under budget.

**2.5.145** The cumulative surplus during the period covered by the audit totalled \$438,248 and the City should consider moving these annual surpluses into a police reserve fund as a contingency to mitigate any future costs that might be associated with unforeseen events requiring extraordinary policing services funding. This may be particularly beneficial given Williams Lake’s combination of community characteristics and policing challenges, mentioned earlier in this report. We note that the establishment of a reserve fund as a contingency is a good practice.

**EXHIBIT 18:**  
RCMP Overtime Costs

RCMP OVERTIME	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Overtime Budget	\$ 179,000	\$ 181,685	\$ 184,410	\$ 187,644
Actual Overtime Pay	\$ 143,131	\$ 167,547	\$ 199,702	\$ 206,173
(Over)/Under Budget	\$ 35,869	\$ 14,138	(\$ 15,292)	(\$ 18,529)
% (Over)/Under Budget	20.0%	7.8%	(8.3%)	(9.9%)

Source: RCMP statements.

## FINDINGS

TOTAL POLICING COST	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE 2010-2013
RCMP Contract & Accommodation	\$ 2,526,075	\$ 2,488,236	\$ 2,782,125	\$ 2,930,456	16%
RCMP Support Service: Salaries	\$ 279,927	\$ 346,486	\$ 350,411	\$ 349,234	25%
RCMP Support Service: Other	\$ 320,959	\$ 274,136	\$ 246,248	\$ 315,046	(2%)
Custody of Prisoners	\$ 33,222	\$ 70,597	\$ 77,240	\$ 260,281	683%
Safer Community Program	\$ 68,816	\$ 83,427	\$ 98,548	\$ 93,822	36%
<b>Policing Cost Before Recoveries</b>	<b>\$ 3,228,999</b>	<b>\$ 3,262,882</b>	<b>\$ 3,554,572</b>	<b>\$ 3,948,839</b>	<b>22%</b>
Recoveries	\$ 72,667	\$ 197,275	\$ 326,208	\$ 197,112	171%
<b>Net Policing Cost</b>	<b>\$ 3,156,332</b>	<b>\$ 3,065,607</b>	<b>\$ 3,228,364</b>	<b>\$ 3,751,727</b>	<b>19%</b>
Budgeted Policing Cost Before Recoveries	\$ 3,347,990	\$ 3,458,250	\$ 3,776,730	\$ 3,850,570	15%
<b>Actual Policing Cost Before Recoveries</b>	<b>\$ 3,228,999</b>	<b>\$ 3,262,882</b>	<b>\$ 3,554,572</b>	<b>\$ 3,948,839</b>	<b>22%</b>
Variance	\$ 118,991	\$ 195,368	\$ 222,158	(\$ 98,269)	-
Variance in %	4%	6%	6%	(3%)	-

**EXHIBIT 19:**  
Breakdown of Total Policing Costs 2010-2013

Source: City of Williams Lake financial statements and other financial records.

## FINDINGS

Williams Lake had the highest per capita policing cost in 2013, in comparison to five other communities.

**2.5.146** The City’s costs on custody of prisoners increased significantly during the review period, by over 600%. We were advised that these costs are unknown and cannot be accurately forecasted as they are based on the costs of the number of prisoners. However, the City was able to charge the costs related to keeping provincial and federal prisoners back to the Province.

### Civilian Support Services

**2.5.147** As shown in Exhibit 20, the ratio of civilian support staff to total policing personnel was 33.3% in each of the four years. This was higher than the 2013 national average of 29%.

**2.5.148** Although the Detachment maintained a level of 12 civilian support staff FTEs during the four years review period, support staff salaries increased by 25% averaging approximately 8% annually. Explanations around this increase were not available due to staff turnover and a lack of documentation. The City should examine this cost increase in order to understand and manage these cost drivers.

### Per Capita Comparators

**2.5.149** As shown in Exhibit 21, Williams Lake had the highest per capita policing cost in 2013, in comparison to five other communities. From 2010 to 2013, the City’s per capita policing cost increased 24 per cent.

EXHIBIT 20: Civilian Support Staff

RCMP OPERATIONS	2010	2011	2012	2013
RCMP Officers (Authorized Staff)	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
Civilian Support Staff	12.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Civilian Staff/Total Personnel	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%

Sources: RCMP invoices and City financial records.

EXHIBIT 21: Per Capita Policing Cost Comparison

CITY	2013 POPULATION	POLICING COSTS PER CAPITA					% CHANGE 2010-2013	AVERAGE 2010-2013
		2010	2011	2012	2013			
Prince Rupert	12,342	\$305	\$331	\$332	\$354	16%	\$331	
Dawson Creek	12,285	\$251	\$258	\$286	\$306	22%	\$275	
Terrace	11,550	\$262	\$260	\$268	\$278	6%	\$267	
Williams Lake	10,888	\$292	\$294	\$323	\$363	24%	\$318	
Quesnel	9,935	\$311	\$344	\$363	\$358	15%	\$344	
Kitimat	8,395	\$187	\$195	\$229	\$234	25%	\$211	
Average	10,899	\$268	\$280	\$300	\$316	18%	\$291	

Source: Police Resources in B.C.

## FINDINGS

It is important for local governments to identify and implement both cost recovery and cost containment approaches.

### Cost Recovery and Cost Containment

**2.5.150** Many local governments have expressed concern over the increasing costs of policing and the potential impact of these pressures on their ability to deliver programs and services. Given the upward trend in police expenditures, it is important for local governments to identify and implement both cost recovery and cost containment approaches.

**2.5.151** City staff told us that the combination of the City’s reluctance to increase police staffing and Williams Lake’s relatively high crime rates made the City hesitant to pursue cost containment on policing services. However, based on our review, there are potential cost containment approaches the City should examine in order to optimize its policing resources.

#### Cost Recovery

**2.5.152** The City receives policing-related cost recoveries from several sources which are described in Exhibit 22. Some of these are fees collected by the RCMP Detachment and passed on to the City.

**2.5.153** Cost recovery amounts in Williams Lake fluctuated over the period covered by the audit. These amounts are shown in Exhibit 23. Recoveries increased considerably in 2011 and 2012, but then returned to 2011 levels in 2013. The spike in 2012 was due to large traffic fine recoveries from the Province. During the four-year period, the City’s cost recoveries equated to approximately two to nine per cent of annual policing costs. This is comparable with other communities using RCMP services that we have reviewed.

EXHIBIT 22: Typical Cost Recovery Items

COST RECOVERY TYPE	EXPLANATION
Keep of Prisoner Expenses	The City is reimbursed for prisoner costs related to keeping provincial and federal prisoners, based on an hourly rate.
Enquiry Fees	The RCMP Detachment charges a fee for responding to specific requests, such as photocopying records and criminal record checks.
False Alarm Penalty Fees	The RCMP Detachment charges a false alarm penalty fee if the same individual/organization incurs a false alarm more than three times.
License/Permit Fees	These fees are for licenses and permits sold by the City.
Charges/Recoveries	The City bills organizations or individuals who request and use the RCMP to provide security services for special events, such as the Williams Lake Stampede.
Traffic Fine Sharing	The Province collects traffic fines and, based on a formula, shares a portion of the revenue with the City.

EXHIBIT 23: RCMP Cost Recoveries 2011 - 2013

POLICING SERVICE	2010	2011	2012	2013	AVERAGE
Recoveries	\$ 72,667	\$ 197,275	\$ 326,208	\$ 197,112	\$ 198,316
Recoveries as a % of Total Policing Costs	2%	6%	9%	5%	6%

Source: City of Williams Lake financial records

## FINDINGS

The City lacked workload analysis data to determine how civilian support staff members divided their time between federal, provincial and municipal support duties.

### **Cost Containment**

**2.5.154** As mentioned previously, the cost of civilian support services is an expenditure the City may be able to influence by requesting changes to the number of staff or through more efficient staff scheduling. Support staff salaries increased by 25 per cent over the period covered by the audit, while the ratio of civilian support staff to total policing personnel was higher than the national average.

**2.5.155** Although the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment is a joint Detachment responsible for federal, provincial and municipal policing, the City is only responsible for paying for the municipal portion of costs. We found that the City lacked workload analysis data to determine how civilian support staff members divided their time between federal, provincial and municipal support duties.

**2.5.156** Data records in the PRIME-BC system (Police Records Information Management Environment) could be analyzed to make such a calculation and determine the appropriate division of costs. This information could also be used to determine whether staffing levels and scheduling are optimal, which could lead to cost reductions. Further, such an analysis could help identify cost containment opportunities if it identifies administrative tasks that could be transferred from higher-paid RCMP members to support staff.

**2.5.157** Another area deserving attention is that of accommodation for the RCMP Detachment. The MPUA stipulates that the City must provide the Detachment building. The current building is owned by the RCMP, which charges the City for this facility. The accommodation cost for the City increased from \$230,469 in 2010 to \$351,485 in 2013, representing a 53 per cent increase.

**2.5.158** Based on a needs assessment conducted by the City in 2011, the current building is inadequate in terms of size and functionality. The City recognizes that it must factor the capital costs for a new police building into its long-range financial plan. While this will require capital investment, owning the building will give the City more control over accommodation costs.

**2.5.159** With a City-owned building, Williams Lake will be able to negotiate a lease agreement with the RCMP and charge rent for space the RCMP requires to deliver provincial and federal policing services. The City will, of course, remain responsible for paying the cost of accommodating municipal RCMP operations.



## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, we found that City of Williams Lake staff and Council members were largely aware of enhancements included in the 2012 Municipal Police Unit Agreement and the authorities provided through the MPUA.

**2.5.160** Overall, we found that City of Williams Lake staff and Council members were largely aware of enhancements included in the 2012 Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) and the authorities provided to them through the MPUA.

**2.5.161** However, we also found several exceptions where the City lacked awareness and understanding of the MPUA. This could limit the City's ability to maintain effective oversight of policing services and could lead to a lack of accountability where the City's needs are not fully considered.

**2.5.162** We also found the City could strengthen its oversight capabilities by formalizing the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of key players involved in managing the MPUA. Further, the City should consider establishing a police committee to add structure to its oversight and governance of the MPUA.

**2.5.163** In addition, we found there are opportunities to enhance the management of policing services in Williams Lake through more robust planning, monitoring and reporting of performance, with the goal of moving toward results-based policing.

**2.5.164** We found that the City and the Detachment worked cooperatively and communicated regularly on policing priorities, policing budgets and crime trends.

**2.5.165** We further found that police resource levels for the City were based largely on a minimal staffing approach, and the City, in conjunction with the Detachment, should consider undertaking a more thorough analysis of staffing to provide greater assurance on the size of the Detachment.

**2.5.166** We found that adequate cost monitoring controls were in place, although documentation of financial discussions could be strengthened. The City worked collaboratively with the Detachment on budgeting. During our audit work, City staff became more aware of provisions added to the 2012 MPUA regarding RCMP cost items and subsequently enhanced its cost monitoring practices.

**2.5.167** Finally, the City should consider establishing a police reserve fund, should pay closer attention to policing cost drivers that are within the control of the City and should explore further cost containment opportunities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendation 1

The City of Williams Lake should take steps to increase the understanding of municipal staff and Council regarding the 2012 MPUA and the authorities it provides them.

### Recommendation 2

The City of Williams Lake should further enhance its oversight of policing services by:

- Clearly defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of key players with regard to policing;
- Considering the creation of a Council committee or similar structure to review policing-related budgets, costs and outcomes related to the RCMP contract; and,
- Developing a set of protocols governing the type and frequency of meetings that deal with policing-related issues.

### Recommendation 3

The City of Williams Lake should develop mechanisms to ensure community input on policing priorities.

### Recommendation 4

The City of Williams Lake should enhance the performance measurement processes it uses to plan, monitor and report on policing priorities.

### Recommendation 5

The City of Williams Lake should request that the RCMP use the Police Resourcing Model to substantiate the authorized strength that has been assigned to Williams Lake.

### Recommendation 6

The City of Williams Lake should strengthen its management of policing costs by:

- Improving its documentation of financial discussions on policing expenditures;
- Considering the establishment of a police reserve fund; and,
- Working with the Detachment to gain a better understanding of the cost drivers related to overtime and civilian support services and explore cost containment opportunities.

## SUMMARY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMENTS

### Recommendation 1

The City of Williams Lake should take steps to increase the understanding of municipal staff and Council regarding the 2012 MPUA and the authorities it provides them.

#### **Response:**

The City, over 2016-2018, will move to fully exercise its authority under the MPUA, including engaging stakeholders as appropriate and the community at large.

### Recommendation 2

The City of Williams Lake should further enhance its oversight of policing services by:

- Clearly defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of key players with regard to policing;
- Considering the creation of a Council committee or similar structure to review policing-related budgets, costs and outcomes related to the RCMP contract; and,
- Developing a set of protocols governing the type and frequency of meetings that deal with policing-related issues.

#### **Response:**

The City will consider forming a separate Police Committee whose membership would include Councilors and may include other regional stakeholders such as elected First Nations' representatives.

### Recommendation 3

The City of Williams Lake should develop mechanisms to ensure community input on policing priorities.

### Recommendation 4

The City of Williams Lake should enhance the performance measurement processes it uses to plan, monitor and report on policing priorities.

### Recommendation 5

The City of Williams Lake should request that the RCMP use the Police Resourcing Model to substantiate the authorized strength that has been assigned to Williams Lake.

#### **Response:**

A Police Committee's terms of reference could include the following responsibilities:

- Following City Committee operating procedures with respect to agendas, minutes and documentation, meeting protocols and public access;
- Ensuring through annual review and consultation the alignment of City and RCMP priorities in Williams Lake and Area as expressed in their respective planning documents – the City's Community Policing Operational Plan, and the RCMP's Annual Performance Plan and Departmental Business Plan;
- Ensuring that City and RCMP plans' resource requirements are made clear (including Police Resourcing Model testing) and by making annual recommendations on plan funding to Council, and through Council to senior governments;
- Ensuring that performance is monitored against planned objectives through reviews including applicable RCMP and City statistics and by receiving presentations from the head of the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment; and
- Ongoing communications with Williams Lake and Area community and stakeholders.

## SUMMARY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMENTS

### Recommendation 6

The City of Williams Lake should strengthen its management of policing costs by:

- Improving its documentation of financial discussions on policing expenditures;
- Considering the establishment of a police reserve fund; and,
- Working with the Detachment to gain a better understanding of the cost drivers related to overtime and civilian support services and explore cost containment opportunities.

#### ***Response:***

Since 2014, the City and the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment have made significant progress in the reorganization of civilian support services and cost containment. The substitution of less expensive municipal staff for RCMP staff resources where appropriate, and the maximization of community volunteer participation is a priority.

## CITY OF WILLIAMS LAKE'S ACTION PLAN

AGLG RECOMMENDATION	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND NEXT STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 1</b></p> <p>The City of Williams Lake should take steps to increase the understanding of municipal staff and Council regarding the 2012 MPUA and the authorities it provides them.</p>	<p>The City recognizes the importance of the new 20 year Municipal Police Unit Agreement (“MPUA”) that expires in 2032. In 2015, significant progress was made in terms of increased communication and coordination between the City and the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment. <b>The City will move to fully exercise its authority under the MPUA</b>, including engaging stakeholders as appropriate and the community at large. Council and staff will continue to improve their understanding of the MPUA.</p>	<p>CAO</p>	<p>2016-2018</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 2</b></p> <p>The City of Williams Lake should further enhance its oversight of policing services by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of key players with regard to policing;</li> <li>Considering the creation of a Council committee or similar structure to review policing-related budgets, costs and outcomes related to the RCMP contract; and,</li> <li>Developing a set of protocols governing the type and frequency of meetings that deal with policing-related issues.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2014, City policing matters have been overseen by Council’s Executive Committee which reports to Council and collaborates with Council’s Finance Committee on financial matters. <b>The City will consider forming a separate Police Committee</b> whose membership would include Councillors and may include other regional stakeholders such as elected First Nations’ representatives. The Committee’s terms of reference would include documenting the roles and responsibilities of the key players in policing Williams Lake and Area.</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>2016</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 3</b></p> <p>The City of Williams Lake should develop mechanisms to ensure community input on policing priorities.</p>	<p>At present, community input on policing priorities occurs through the City’s elected Councillors and through a network of community based policing organizations, groups and volunteers. <b>A Police Committee’s terms of reference could encourage expanded community input</b> by way of public committee meetings and perhaps by way of an annual planning event or regional policing symposium.</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>2016</p>

## CITY OF WILLIAMS LAKE'S ACTION PLAN

AGLG RECOMMENDATION	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND NEXT STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 4</b></p> <p>The City of Williams Lake should enhance the performance measurement processes it uses to plan, monitor and report on policing priorities.</p>	<p>In Council's consideration of forming a <b>Police Committee</b>, the <b>proposed terms of reference</b> could include the following responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of the Municipal Police Unit Agreement;</li> <li>• Ongoing communications with Williams Lake and Area community and stakeholders;</li> <li>• Ensuring through annual review and consultation the alignment of City and RCMP priorities in Williams Lake and Area as expressed in their respective planning documents – the City's Community Policing Operational Plan, and the RCMP's Annual Performance Plan and Departmental Business Plan;</li> <li>• Ensuring that City and RCMP plans' resource requirements are made clear and by making annual recommendations on plan funding to Council, and through Council to senior governments;</li> <li>• Ensuring that performance is monitored against planned objectives through reviews including applicable RCMP and City statistics and by receiving reports and presentations from the City's CAO and the head of the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment; and</li> <li>• Reviewing with staff the actual RCMP service invoices received against annual budget.</li> </ul>	<p>Council</p>	<p>2016</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 5</b></p> <p>The City of Williams Lake should request that the RCMP use the Police Resourcing Model to substantiate the authorized strength that has been assigned to Williams Lake.</p>	<p>The City is committed to seeking out and adopting best practices when they are applicable to communities of its size. <b>A Police Committee, as part of its annual planning and funding recommendation responsibilities, would be expected to request and consider the results of Police Resourcing Model assessments.</b></p>	<p>CAO/RCMP</p>	<p>2016-2018</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION 6</b></p> <p>The City of Williams Lake should strengthen its management of policing costs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving its documentation of financial discussions on policing expenditures;</li> <li>• Considering the establishment of a police reserve fund; and,</li> <li>• Working with the Detachment to gain a better understanding of the cost drivers related to overtime and civilian support services and explore cost containment opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>(a) A City Police Committee would follow standard City operating procedures</b> with respect to agendas, minutes and report documentation. These documents would be distributed and maintained consistent with City Council policies and the meetings conducted in accordance with City Council meeting protocols. A Committee's terms of reference could include all aspects of financial matters and hence those matters would be fully documented. <b>(b) The City considers as part of its overall financial planning effort the need for departmental/function "operating reserve accounts" and "capital reserve funds". In 2016-2018, the City is updating these accounts and funds. As part of this process, the needs of all Protective Services will be assessed.</b> (c) Since 2014, the City and the Williams Lake RCMP Detachment have made significant progress in the reorganization of civilian support services and cost containment. <b>The substitution of less expensive municipal staff for RCMP staff resources where appropriate, and the maximization of community volunteer participation is a priority.</b></p>	<p>(b) CFO, (c) CAO/RCMP</p>	<p>2016-2018</p>

## ABOUT THE AUDIT

The work completed for this audit was conducted in accordance with Canadian Standards on Assurance Engagements.

### Audit Objectives

**2.5.168** The overall objective of the audit was to determine whether the City of Williams Lake has effectively managed its responsibilities under the Police Act and the Municipal Police Unit Agreement by establishing sound managerial oversight practices including monitoring budgets, cost containment objectives and service levels for policing services while respecting the independence of policing operations. In addition, we looked for examples of leading practices and tools that other local governments could use to support their management of police agreements and police budget oversight.

**2.5.169** Our specific objectives were to assess the City of Williams Lake's governance structure for policing, budgeting, forecasting and cost monitoring and reporting processes.

### Period Covered by the Audit

**2.5.170** The audit covered the four year period 2010 to 2013. Examination work was substantially completed in 2014.

### Audit Scope and Approach

**2.5.171** The audit included a review of the City of Williams Lake's performance in two specific areas over the years 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013:

- Corporate governance within the local government.
- Police budget management in accordance with the Municipal Police Unit Agreement.

**2.5.172** The audit dealt only with local government operations, so did not include the RCMP Detachment's actual policing operations or its processes related to cost control and police Detachment management.

**2.5.173** In carrying out the audit, we interviewed City staff, the Mayor of Williams Lake and City Council, as well as representatives of Williams Lake's RCMP Detachment.

**2.5.174** The documentation we reviewed included agreements, plans and reports relating to policing in Williams Lake.

## ABOUT THE AUDIT

### Audit Criteria

**2.5.175** Performance audit criteria define the standards we applied to assess Williams Lake’s performance. We express these criteria as reasonable expectations for the City’s management of its police agreement and police budget oversight to achieve expected results and outcomes.

**2.5.176** Below are the criteria we used to assess the City of Williams Lake:

1. The local government has established a governance structure that is appropriate and allows for effective oversight of the police detachment.
    - The local government understands its authorities under the MPPUA and is positioned to exploit these authorities to contain policing costs.
    - The local government has appropriate engagement with the RCMP detachment.
  2. The local government has established budgeting, forecasting and cost monitoring processes that are adequate and effective in directing resources to where they are needed.
    - An annual priority-setting process exists within the local government to set priorities, goals and objectives for the RCMP detachment as allowed by the MPPUA.
    - The process for setting the priorities, goals and objectives is defined and transparent and, through community input, reflects the community’s safety and security priorities.
- The local government prepares a projected annual budget and projected budgets for the five-year financial plan for the RCMP detachment, in accordance with Article 16 of the MPPUA and reviews and discusses the budget with the RCMP detachment.
  - “Budget-to-actual” reports are received by the local government and variance analysis is performed in a timely manner; key cost drivers are identified and evaluated with regard to those that the government can and cannot influence; budget-to-actual variances are investigated on a regular basis.
  - The local government requests data and information that allows the government to monitor the performance of the RCMP detachment, particularly with regard to effectiveness in accordance with Article 17 of the MPPUA.
  - The local government:
    - > Identifies possible opportunities for cost containment, including new technologies and practices in other jurisdictions, and discusses these opportunities with the RCMP detachment in the context of Article 16 of the MPPUA.
    - > Monitors policing services provided in addition to law enforcement and 1) considers revenue-generating opportunities without impacting its public policing priorities; 2) uses its ability to recover costs related to additional policing requirements in a manner that is consistent with the policing agreements, the *B.C. Police Act* and the *RCMP Act*.



## ABOUT THE AUDIT

### Performance Audit Process

2.5.177 At the beginning of the performance audit process, we shared key audit-related documents with the City of Williams Lake. These included a description of the audit background, focus, scope and criteria and an engagement protocol describing the audit process and requirements. At the audit reporting stage, we also obtained management confirmation that the findings included in this report are factually based. The audit process is summarized in Exhibit 24.

### EXHIBIT 24: Performance Audit Process



## APPENDIX 1 – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON POLICING SERVICES IN B.C.

This section contains detailed contextual information on policing services in B.C.

### How Policing is Delivered in B.C.

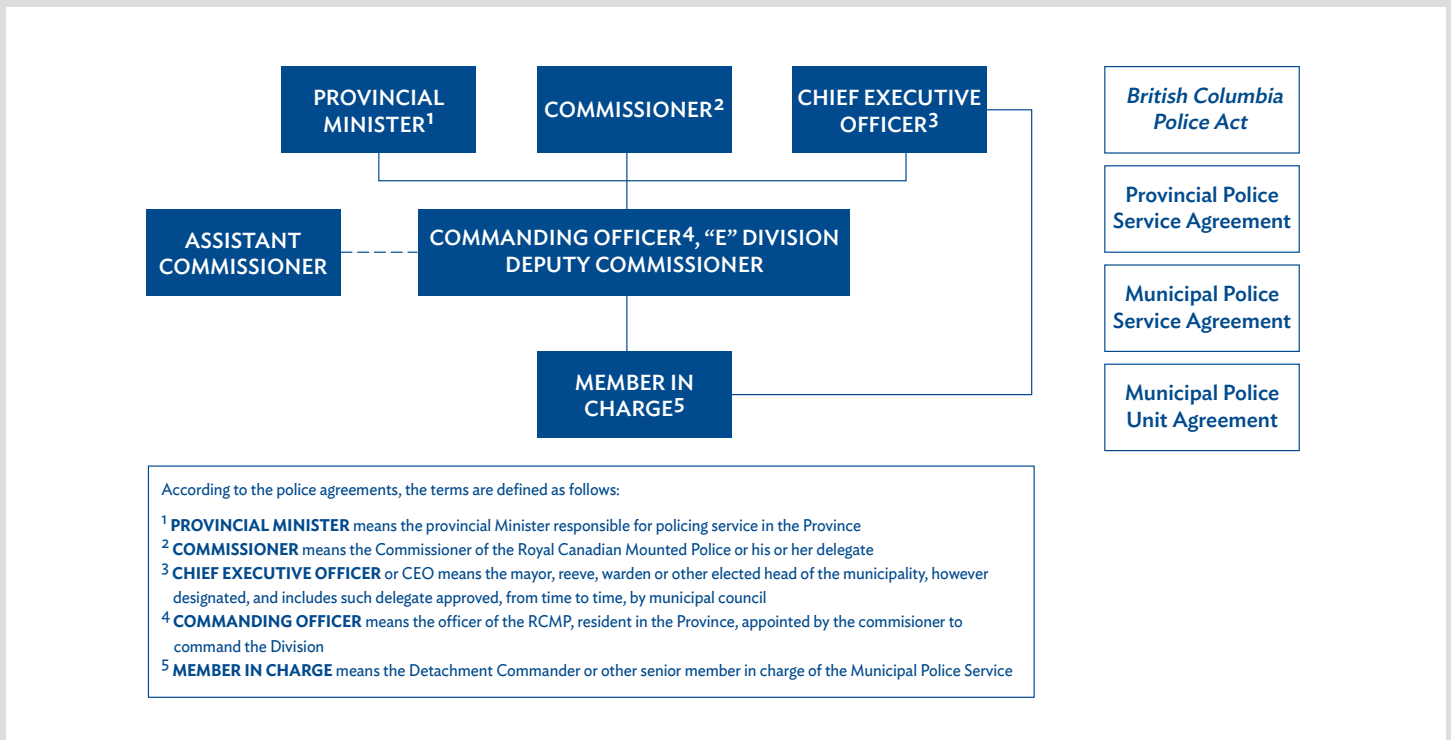
2.5.178 The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has been providing contract policing in British Columbia since 1950, when the province ceased to have its own police force.

2.5.179 The *British Columbia Police Act* stipulates that a municipality must assume responsibility for police services when its population reaches 5,000 persons. There are three options for municipalities to meet their policing requirements:

- Form their own municipal police department;
- Contract with an existing municipal police department; or,
- Contract with the provincial government for RCMP municipal services.

2.5.180 Exhibit 25 illustrates the high-level relationship between the relevant act, agreements and positions. The Chief Executive Officer is the mayor, reeve, warden or other elected official of the municipality.

EXHIBIT 25: RCMP Police Structure



## APPENDIX 1 – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON POLICING SERVICES IN B.C.

**2.5.181** The RCMP has policing models for municipal detachments, regional and integrated detachments and First Nations policing. The municipal detachment model is the only one of these that is relevant to this performance audit.

**2.5.182** There are currently 74 municipalities in B.C. with populations of 5,000 or more. The number of municipalities by policing model is shown in Exhibit 26. A brief description of these models follows the table.

**EXHIBIT 26: Number of B.C. Municipalities by Policing Model, 2014**

POLICING MODEL	# OF MUNICIPALITIES
Independent Force	12
Over 15,000 RCMP	31
5,000 – 15,000 RCMP	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>

**2.5.183** A municipality that chooses to have its own independent police force pays 100 per cent of the costs and has a civilian police board to govern the police department. The board works with the chief constable to set priorities, goals and objectives. These must be consistent with provincial laws and must be in response to community needs.

**2.5.184** A municipality that chooses to contract with the provincial government for RCMP municipal policing services enters into a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA) with the Province.

**2.5.185** Municipalities with populations over 15,000 pay 90 per cent of the direct policing cost, with the federal government paying the remaining ten per cent. Municipalities with populations between 5,000 and 15,000 receiving police services from the RCMP pay 70 per cent, with the federal government paying the remaining 30 per cent. All municipalities that contract for RCMP services pay 100 per cent of certain costs, such as detachment accommodation and support staff.

**2.5.186** The RCMP’s “E” Division in B.C. is the largest of 15 RCMP Divisions across Canada. Through “E” Division, the RCMP provides federal, provincial, municipal and First Nations policing services, as well as policing infrastructure such as air services, communications and specialized units. “E” Division Headquarters are located in Surrey. The RCMP divides the province into four districts: Lower Mainland District, North District, South East District and Vancouver Island District.

## APPENDIX 1 – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON POLICING SERVICES IN B.C.

### Crime Trends

2.5.187 It was beyond the scope of this audit to examine causes of crime and any links that may exist between policing levels and types of crime. However, we acknowledge that it is widely accepted that crime rates are influenced by a complex range of factors. While the media and the public often draw direct links between crime rates or individual high profile crimes and policing levels and methods, we do not assume any such links.

#### In Canada and B.C.

2.5.188 Police-reported crime has declined in Canada over the past 20 years. As Exhibit 27 indicates, this trend continued between 2010 and 2013.

EXHIBIT 27: Police-Reported Crime, Canada 2010 - 2013

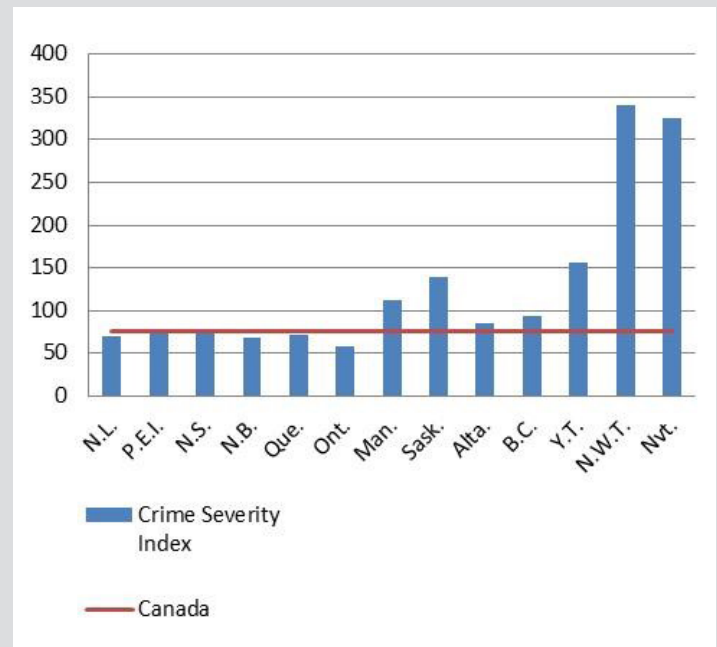
YEAR	# OF REPORTED CRIMES
2010	2,094,338
2011	1,984,790
2012	1,957,227
2013	1,824,837

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

2.5.189 Across Canada, close to two million criminal incidents were reported to police services in 2013, about 130,000 fewer than in the previous year.

2.5.190 For almost all provinces, the Crime Severity Index has remained low in recent years and is now the lowest it has been since 1998, the first year such a statistic was calculated. The index is calculated by assigning a weight to each type of offence based on sentences handed down by the courts. While the index for B.C. has declined in recent years, it remains higher than the Canadian average. This is indicated in Exhibit 28.

EXHIBIT 28: Crime Severity Index by Province and Territory, 2012



Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11854/c-g/desc/desc05-eng.htm>, downloaded July 18, 2014.

## APPENDIX 1 – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON POLICING SERVICES IN B.C.

2.5.191 Exhibit 29 shows that crime trends in Williams Lake were mixed during the period covered by the audit. The overall crime rate and caseload increased between 2010 and 2013, as did the numbers of criminal code offences, property offences, motor vehicle offences and administration of justice offences. However, the number of drug offences and violent offences declined.

CITY OF WILLIAMS LAKE	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE
Criminal Code Offences (CCO)	2,860	2,487	3,047	3,208	12%
Crime Rate	260	226	279	295	13%
Violent Offences	587	586	626	535	-9%
Property Offences	1,054	993	1,194	1,105	5%
Other Criminal Code Offences	1,219	908	1,227	1,568	29%
Homicide Offences	-	-	-	-	0%
Motor Vehicle Offences	84	36	107	130	55%
Administration of Justice Offences	242	242	292	353	46%
Drug Offences (CDSA)	259	200	177	208	-20%
Number of Calls for Service	8,994	8,255	8,564	8,583	-5%
Caseload	119	104	127	134	12%

**EXHIBIT 29:**  
Williams Lake Crime Statistics  
2010 to 2013

Sources: Police Services, Ministry of Justice.

## APPENDIX 1 – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON POLICING SERVICES IN B.C.

### Policing Cost Trends

2.5.192 Over the period covered by the audit, policing costs in Williams Lake increased faster than the combined growth in population and the Consumer Price Index, though the per capita policing cost remained well below the national average.

2.5.193 As Exhibit 30 shows, the reported policing costs in Williams Lake increased by 22.3 per cent between 2010 and 2013, compared to 3.4 per cent growth in B.C.'s Consumer Price Index.

POLICING COST	2010	2011	2012	2013	% CHANGE
Total Policing Cost <sup>^</sup>	\$3,228,999	\$ 3,262,883	\$ 3,554,572	\$ 3,948,842	22.3%
Population	11,057	11,094	11,004	10,888	-1.5%
Total Policing Cost Per Capita	\$ 292	\$ 294	\$ 323	\$ 363	24.2%
Consumer Price Index growth (B.C.)	113.80	116.50	117.80	117.70	3.4%

**EXHIBIT 30:**  
Growth of Policing Costs in Williams Lake Relative to Population and Inflation

<sup>^</sup> Total policing costs include RCMP contract costs and municipal support services costs.

Source: Statistics Canada and Police Resources in B.C. 2010-2013.

2.5.194 Exhibit 31 shows that per capita policing costs in Williams Lake were increasing and approaching the Canadian average over the four-year audit period.

CITY OF WILLIAMS LAKE	2010	2011	2012	2013
Cost per Capita - Canada	\$ 372	\$ 377	\$ 390	\$ 387
Cost per Capita - Williams Lake	\$ 292	\$ 294	\$ 323	\$ 363
Difference	\$ 80	\$ 83	\$ 67	\$ 24

**EXHIBIT 31:**  
Per Capital Policing Costs in Canada and Williams Lake

Source: Statistics Canada and Police Resources in B.C. 2010-2013.

#### AGLG CONTACT INFORMATION

The AGLG welcomes your feedback and comments. Contact us electronically using our website contact form on [www.aglg.ca](http://www.aglg.ca) or email [info@aglg.ca](mailto:info@aglg.ca) to share your questions or comments.

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