

UNION OF  
BRITISH  
COLUMBIA  
MUNICIPALITIES

#60 – 10551 SHELLBRIDGE V  
RICHMOND, B.C. V6X 2W9 ☐  
(604) 270-8226axF(604) 270-9116  
www.civicnet.bc.ca  
E-mail: ubcm@civicnet.bc.ca

## New Policing Actions

### NEW FUNDING

The Premier announced that an additional \$122 million will be spent on policing, correction services and courts over the next three years.

The funding is intended to build on other crime-fighting initiatives such as the Integrated Organized Crime Unit, the Amber Alert Program, and new policing technology – the PRIME system – that allows improved communications and record sharing between police across the province.

There will be a total of \$122 million in new funding over the next three years:

- 2005/06: \$35 million (\$30 million for police and corrections, \$5 million for courts).
- 2006/07: \$42 million (\$32 million for police and corrections, \$10 million for courts).
- 2007/08: \$45 million (\$34 million for police and corrections, \$11 million for courts).

### EXPANSION OF PROVINCIAL FORCE

The province will add 215 more RCMP officers this year:

- 89 more police officers to fight serious and major crime;
- 14 more police officers to fight cyber-crime;
- 80 more police officers for rural communities and general policing; and,
- 32 more police officers for First Nations communities.

### SAFER COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

The Premier indicated that the new funding and increased police officers are part of the Province's Safer Communities Initiative announced at the UBCM Convention in 2004, that includes:

- 100 per cent of all traffic fines going to local government for crime prevention and policing.
- A new \$84-million federal-provincial-local partnership to find innovative solutions to the problems of homelessness, mental health and drug addiction.
- The federal-provincial health funding arrangement that will assist in providing additional mental health and addiction services across B.C.
- The *Safe Streets Act* and *Trespass Act* will give police and property owners new tools for combating the harassment of seniors and

other citizens on the streets.

The *Safe Streets Act* and amended *Trespass Act* has been brought into force. The *Safe Streets Act* makes it an offence to:

- solicit anyone in an aggressive manner, either verbally or physically.
- solicit a person who is at one of several "captive audience" locations, including an automated teller machine, a pay phone or a bus stop, from within five metres of that location.
- while on a roadway, solicit a person who is in a vehicle, whether the vehicle is standing, stopped or parked.
- unless soliciting a ride in an emergency situation, disobey a current provision of the *Motor Vehicle Act* that prohibits being on a roadway if there is a sidewalk, walking on the wrong side of a roadway when there is no sidewalk, or soliciting a ride, employment or business on a roadway.

The *Safe Streets Act* and amendments to the *Trespass Act* received third reading and royal assent in late October. In November 2004, the Attorney General requested submissions on methods to bring the legislation into force. Representatives of the Safe Streets Coalition and the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association were consulted, as well as the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and various police representatives.

After a review of the submissions and consultations, the ticketing enforcement method was decided upon. Tickets will range from \$86 to \$115 and include a victim surcharge levy. When a violator's conduct is more serious, or where the violator has repeatedly breached the *Safe Streets Act* or amended *Trespass Act*, arrest is authorized by both statutes.

Enforcement of the *Safe Streets Act* and the amended *Trespass Act* will be up to police. The Acts allow the police to respond proportionately to specific situations and information, including issuing a ticket.

### PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE

The Premier has indicated that he intends to hold a special Provincial Congress meeting later this year that will focus on public safety.

The Premier announced the creation of a Task Force on Public Safety, made up of representatives from all three levels of government and First Nations communities. The purpose of the Task Force will be to make recommendations to the Provincial Congress on how all levels of government can work together to create safer communities through legislative improvements and investments in crime prevention and policing.

The UBCM will be asked to appoint local government representatives to the Task Force.

Please make copies of this circular and distribute them to Council/Board members and staff.