



Central Saanich Police Service

1903 Mount Newton Cross Road, Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2A9
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MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Central Saanich Mayor & Council

DATE: March 30, 2026

REFERENCE: 2026 Police Budget

FROM: Chief Constable Ian Lawson and the Central Saanich Police Board

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum outlines the key highlights and major proposed changes to the 2026 Central Saanich Police Service budget, including the recommended funding increase, primary cost drivers, and a brief overview of projected financials. It also summarizes the rationale for the request and the main investment and revenue considerations for the coming year. For 2026, the Central Saanich Police Service is seeking a budget increase of \$388,500, representing a 5.7% budget increase, or a 1.63% and \$45 property tax increase to an average home. This brings the total proposed operating budget to \$8,036,000. The key drivers of this change, along with notable adjustments across budget categories, are summarized in the sections that follow.

Operating Revenues	2025 Budget	2025 Aug 31 YTD	% Budget	2025 Forecast	% Budget	2026 SQ Budget
Sale of service	\$ 16,200	\$ 4,870	30.1%	\$ 7,600	46.9%	\$ 14,200
Small Community Protection Grant	163,000	81,500	50.0%	163,000	100.0%	164,000
Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Grant	173,000	86,500	50.0%	173,000	100.0%	173,000
G&GVAF Provincial Grant	250,000	250,000				
Operating Reserves	190,000	-		-		210,200
Other Revenue and Grants	211,600	203,612	96.2%	420,200	198.6%	217,700
Total Revenues	\$ 1,003,800	\$ 626,482	62.4%	\$ 763,800	62.4%	\$ 779,100
Police Board	\$ 11,000	\$ 9,532	86.7%	\$ 10,100	91.8%	\$ 52,000
General Administration	1,773,900	1,127,479	63.6%	1,717,200	96.8%	1,946,800
Integrated and Contract Services	890,900	476,356	53.5%	748,000	84.0%	1,000,300
Patrol	3,402,900	1,817,257	53.4%	3,497,200	102.8%	3,429,700
Detective	391,100	181,843	46.5%	404,200	103.3%	409,900
Traffic and Community Engagement	696,000	322,047	46.3%	620,200	89.1%	668,400
Detention and Custody	18,500	11,450	61.9%	26,100	141.1%	20,500
Fleet Vehicles	145,200	71,478	49.2%	143,200	98.6%	182,400
Strategic Projects	240,000	138,635				61,300
Operations Contingency	150,000	-				125,000
Transfer to Reserve - Operating (Grant)	50,000	-				-
Transfer to Reserve - Vehicles	100,000	121,663	121.7%	95,000	95.0%	137,000
Transfer to Reserve - Equipment	24,000	16,000	66.7%	24,000	100.0%	24,000
Subtotal before Secondments	\$ 7,893,500	\$ 4,293,740	54.4%	\$ 7,285,200	92.3%	\$ 8,057,300



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Secondment recoveries	(878,200)	(508,337)	57.9%	(770,300)	87.7%	(1,114,000)
Secondment Expenses	878,200	508,337	57.9%	770,300	87.7%	1,114,000
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 7,893,500	\$ 4,293,740	54.4%	\$ 7,285,200	92.3%	\$ 8,057,300
Increase/(Decrease) in Net Budget		5.70%				5.64%
Cost to the average Homeowner	\$ 737					\$ 782
Average Property Tax Increase		1.51%				1.62%

POLICE BOARD

The Police Board is proposing a \$39,500 increase to support core Board governance and operations, enabling it to fulfill its statutory mandate and legislative obligations. The increased funding will support community engagement required every three years to inform policing priorities, goals, and objectives required by BC Provincial Policing Standards, updates to the service's strategic priorities, goals, and objectives in alignment with the Police Act, and the retention of independent legal counsel. Funding will also support the establishment of a secure internal document-sharing and collaboration platform to ensure the Board can access governance documents and confidential information required to carry out its oversight responsibilities, as well as increased professional development and membership costs associated with the Board's expansion to nine members.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

A budget increase of \$127,900 has been allocated to Police Administration. This adjustment is necessary due to previously understated benefit costs in earlier budget cycles, requiring an upward correction to accurately reflect actual employee wages and benefit expenses, including higher WorkSafeBC premium rates and increases resulting from the Collective Agreement.

POLICE BOAT

The Service received a donated police boat in 2025, which now requires a budget to meet commercial vessel safety standards and to support ongoing annual operations. The initial cost to properly outfit the vessel is estimated at between \$80,000 and \$90,000, with yearly operating costs projected at approximately \$20,000, not including additional labour requirements associated with expanded operational capacity and support for the vessel program. The Service will develop an operational plan and marine policy for Board review prior to the Boat entering service.

District Fleet Management will also need to incorporate this new asset into its long-term fleet plan, and an estimated \$7,000 increase to reserves will be required in future years for capital replacement items such as the motor and canvas.

INTEGRATED AND CONTRACT SERVICES

The 2025 budget for external contracted services and integrated units totaled \$890,900. Contracted services continue to experience steady, and in some cases significant, cost increases. While the Service can choose whether to participate in some of these programs, it has limited influence over the annual cost escalations once engaged.

The 2026 integrated units budget reflects an increase of \$109,400



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Integrated Units:

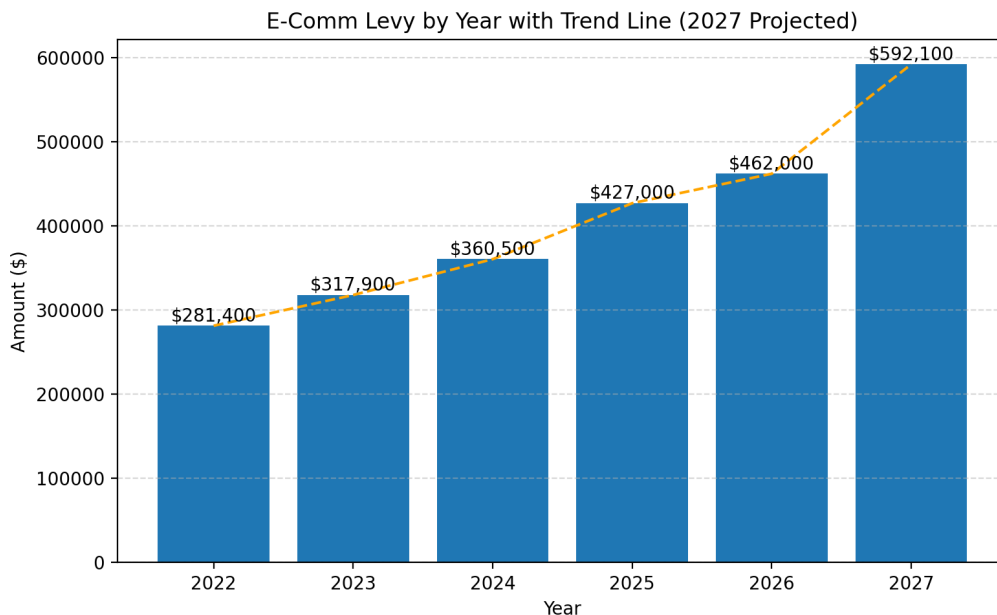
The Service's cost to participate in the region's integrated units has risen substantially over recent years. For 2026, the increase is projected at \$7,300, consistent with 2025. Previous annual increases were \$7,300 in 2025 (following withdrawal from three units), \$6,271 (4.2%) in 2024, \$18,942 (15.0%) in 2023, and \$10,528 (9.1%) in 2022.

In 2025, the Service withdrew from three regional integrated units, the Mobile Youth Services Team, the Regional Domestic Violence Unit, and the Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team, resulting in savings of approximately \$48,500 which was carried over to 2026.

EComm Dispatch Services:

The 2025 budget for E-Comm dispatch services was \$421,000, an increase of \$60,500 over 2024, which included a phased deficit recovery payment. Costs are projected to rise to approximately \$462,000 in 2026 (an increase of \$41,000) and to \$592,100 in 2027 due to the new NexGen 911 levy, a cost previously funded by the Province, which has been phased in with contingent funds over previous budget cycles.

For budgeting purposes, a 9.7 percent increase has been applied for 2026, bringing the estimated levy for CSPS to \$462,000. The below chart illustrates the upward trend in E-Comm levies and service fees from 2022 to 2026, with projections to 2027, and highlight their impact on overall budget requirements.



FLEET VEHICLES

The Service maintains a fleet of nine vehicles: six in active duty and three inactive. Active-duty vehicles are generally replaced every three to four years. In Q1 2025, two Ford Interceptors were replaced, and a vehicle purchased in late 2024 was fully outfitted—both actions delayed from 2024 due to ongoing supply delays. By Q2 2025, all fleet replacements were completed and brought up to date. No additional vehicles have been added to the fleet; all



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changes reflect replacements only. An additional \$25,000 has been allocated to support asset management planning for fleet replacement cost escalation.

NEW POSITIONS

The Operational Administration position and the Communications Position both strengthen effective policing and directly support the CSPS Strategic Plan. The Operational Administration role reduces administrative workload on frontline supervisors, improving operational efficiency and ensuring key tasks such as policy management, equipment coordination, and compliance are completed consistently. The Communications function enhances transparency and community engagement by ensuring timely, accurate information sharing. Together, these roles increase organizational capacity, support strategic priorities, and allow officers to stay focused on core policing duties.

CSPS currently has the lowest ratio of civilian staff to sworn officers in the region.

Officer-to-Civilian Staff Ratios (Regional Comparison)

- Saanich: 3.08 officers per civilian
- VicPD: 3.17 officers per civilian
- Vancouver: 3.0 officers per civilian
- Delta: 2.5 officers per civilian
- West Vancouver: 3.43 officers per civilian
- **Central Saanich: 4.33 officers per civilian**

When civilian capacity is too low, sworn officers and supervisory staff take on administrative, clerical, and coordination tasks that civilians are typically responsible for. This reduces the time officers can spend on core policing duties such as investigations, proactive patrol, community engagement, and follow-up work.

With a large percentage of Central Saanich constables having less than ten years of service, it is essential that Sergeants fully exercise their core supervisory roles to support effective policing. Training and mentoring newer officers is an ongoing reality within the department, and ensuring supervisors have the capacity to properly monitor, coach, and guide staff is critical to operational effectiveness.

Frontline supervisors and officers may experience increased administrative burden, leading to fatigue, slower response times, and reduced capacity for proactive policing. Over time, this can contribute to lower morale and decreased overall effectiveness.

Civilian professionals often handle specialized areas such as Freedom of Information, policy management, training documentation, data quality, and regulatory compliance. Insufficient staffing in these areas increases the risk of:

- delayed disclosures
- policy gaps
- missed deadlines
- lower-quality data for reporting and strategic planning



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These issues can undermine public trust and expose the organization to legal or regulatory challenges. The filings and requests from these agencies when performing investigations have been increasing over time and amount to a significant portion of the administrative duties expected within modern and transparent policing. This responsibility can be completed by civilian staff rather than by Sergeants. Modern policing relies heavily on roles traditionally filled by civilian staff: IT support, analytics, communications, records management, emergency planning, outreach, and administrative coordination. Without adequate civilian support, the organization struggles to meet modern expectations for transparency, community engagement, and evidence-based decision-making.

Using sworn officers to perform civilian duties is significantly more expensive. This reduces budget flexibility and limits investment in areas that directly improve safety and service delivery.

Part-time Operational Administration:

The 2026 budget includes funding for a permanent part-time Administrative Support position (24 hours per week) at an annual cost of \$60,100. This role is intended to address growing administrative and compliance requirements from governing and regulatory bodies while strengthening overall organizational capacity. Any position within the Central Saanich Police Association falls within the "Schedule A" of the Collective Agreement,

A recent review identified workload and capacity challenges, including supervisory pressures, excessive administrative duties assigned to the Operations NCO, and gaps in policy management. The new position will help address these issues by supporting fleet and equipment coordination, serving as an IT liaison, organizing policy materials, and providing front-counter services. In addition, recent legislative changes related to material disclosure have increased staff demands, particularly in managing Freedom of Information requests.

Overall, this position is a targeted, cost-effective investment that supports operational efficiency, reduces risk, allows supervisors to prioritize their primary functions and strengthens service delivery.

Part-time Communications:

A dedicated part-time Strategic Communications Specialist will strengthen the Central Saanich Police Service's ability to support public safety by ensuring timely, accurate, and consistent communication with the community during both routine operations and emergent events.

As expectations for transparency, responsiveness, and meaningful community engagement continue to grow, this role will provide the focused capacity needed to clearly convey public-safety information, highlight progress on the Police Service's Strategic Plan, and reinforce public trust. This position will be integral to the public engagement mandate within the Strategic Plan of the department. The current method of public communication as an ad hoc duty to front-line constables, and supervisory staff decreases the ability for the service to deliver an effective



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communications strategy. Streamlining is crucial for consistent and timely messaging. This position will help the department maintain public trust in policing

A contract position rather than a permanent part-time employee limited to a maximum of three days per week offers the Service greater flexibility to distribute communications support across the full week, ensuring regular monitoring, rapid response to emerging issues, and steady engagement with stakeholders. This model provides broader coverage while maintaining cost-effectiveness, as the hourly rate would remain comparable to a senior civilian staff classification with appropriate in-lieu-of-benefits compensation. By enhancing issue management, increasing awareness of policing initiatives, and relieving operational and senior staff of ad hoc communications duties, this specialized resource will directly support both, Council's and Police priorities for community well-being, accountability, and strong partnerships ultimately contributing to a safer and better-informed community.

A 0.5 FTE communications position, originally budgeted at \$28,000 under the District's workforce plan, was intended to provide communications support to the Service. Beginning in 2026, this function will shift to the police services budget and be delivered through contracted services, with a budget of \$40,000. This reduced amount reflects Council's decision to not support early approval.

CONCLUSION

The increase in civilian positions and associated budget allocations reflects a strategic response to the growing demands of modern policing. By investing in targeted roles such as Administrative Support and contracted Communications services, the organization is better equipped to handle complex administrative, compliance, and outreach needs. This approach not only improves operational efficiency and risk management but also enhances service quality and transparency for the community. Overall, the budget increase represents a thoughtful commitment to long-term organizational capacity, fiscal responsibility, and public trust.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ian Lawson
Chief Constable
Central Saanich Police Service