



# Metro Vancouver Transit Police 2020 Report to the Community

## Policing the Moving City

Video Companion



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## Message from the Police Board Chair

It is by now a cliché to say that 2020 was an unprecedented year. As the pandemic accelerated, system ridership shrunk dramatically, but calls for service increased; prohibited from meeting in person, our Police Board meetings moved online and became more accessible; and worldwide shock and anger at the death of George Floyd triggered new calls for police reform and accountability around the world, forever altering the relationship between police services and the communities they serve.

Throughout this momentous year, our officers demonstrated enormous skill and dedication as front-line workers, continuing to ensure system and passenger safety despite new potential risks to their own health. Transit Police officers saved a record 32 individuals by administering Naloxone. Sadly, this was a 60% increase over prior years. With masks mandatory on transit, Transit Police issued 228 tickets in the latter half of the



year, ensuring that passengers remained in compliance with public health orders. All of this was in addition to an increase in their regular calls for service; the pandemic also caused widespread job losses, had serious mental health impacts and strained social services. On behalf of the Police Board, I want to thank all of the staff of Metro Vancouver Transit Police ("MVTP") for their commitment, professionalism and service to public safety.

At the onset of the pandemic, every organization had to pivot, including our Police Board. Our meetings had previously always been in person, but the shift to virtual meetings sped up our transition to live streaming and now our open meetings are always live streamed on Youtube. We are pleased that our meetings are more readily accessible to the public and encourage you to attend. Our schedule is available on the MVTP website.

Our work on the new strategic plan that will guide the organization for the next 3-5 years began early in 2020, was interrupted by pandemic-related restrictions, and resumed later in the year. Despite current pandemic-related realities, we know that in the next few years we'll see the completion of both the Millennium-Broadway and Surrey-Langley SkyTrain extensions, as well as general transit system and population growth. Public safety issues including the ongoing opioid epidemic, sexual offending and gang violence remain issues of concern. All of this will impact demands for service and will factor into our new plan.

We continue to listen closely to the calls for police reform worldwide and here at home. We recognize that public agencies must accelerate anti-racism efforts and implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Our Police Board and leadership team is strongly committed to working towards Reconciliation, promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in our organization, and ensuring that our police service reflects, and is responsive to, the many diverse communities we serve.

*Sara Levine, Chair - Metro Vancouver Transit Police Board*



## Message from the Chief Officer

Like many other industries, public sector transit took a significant hit in early 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic caused many citizens to stay at home. Ridership dropped over 80% in the initial stages, later recovering to approximately 60% below pre-pandemic levels. This drop in ridership did not result in a proportional decrease in crime and calls for service. Files generated from our 87-77-77 text service actually increased due to new demands such as for mandatory mask enforcement. Officers were kept busy both preserving the peace and responding to new public safety and health requirements.



Despite the increased pressures and anxieties placed upon them, I am proud to say that the employees at Transit Police rose to the occasion. With the issuance of added personal protective equipment and cleaning protocols, our officers remained on the frontlines of the transit system, ensuring that members of the public reached their destinations safely. Transit Police dispatchers responded to numerous calls and texts related to mask compliance, on top of calls for service related to crime and disorder. And support staff, many of whom were working remotely, continued to deliver the necessary administrative services required to keep the Transit Police Service functioning.

We also spent the latter half of 2020 listening closely to the calls for police reform that arose in the summer, following the murder of George Floyd in the United States. We recognized that, despite our differences with our southern neighbour, all police agencies must strive to improve public safety outcomes and to examine alternate methods of keeping our citizens safe from harm. Transit Police took a number of measures last year towards this goal, including the establishment of our first Indigenous Liaison Officer. It is our hope that this new position will further increase trust and understanding between our police service and the many Indigenous people who rely on public transit for their transportation needs.

As 2020 came to a close, Transit Police continued to actively plan for the future including the early development of a new strategic plan. Providing safety through community partnerships will be a central component of our strategy moving forward, since police acting alone cannot address many underlying issues that officers respond to each day. It will take a concerted effort working with our community partners to address ongoing issues of addictions, mental health and homelessness, and ensure that every person who steps on public transit receives the service and the care that they require.

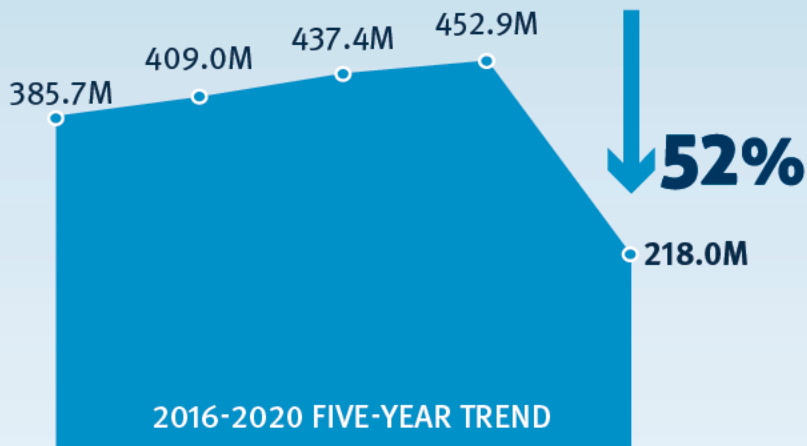
*Dave Jones, Chief Officer - Metro Vancouver Transit Police*



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# 2020 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

## Transit Ridership



↓3%

### Arrests on New Charges <sup>1</sup>

down by 3% from 734 (2019)  
to 709 (2020)

↓1%

### Breaches <sup>2</sup>

down by 1% from 474 (2019)  
to 471 (2020)

<sup>1</sup> Arrest means an actual arrest and all other cases where charges were recommended to Crown Counsel.

<sup>2</sup> Breaches including secondary offences; does not include assists.

## Police Officer Hires

**44.5%**

of new hires were  
female officers

**55.5%**

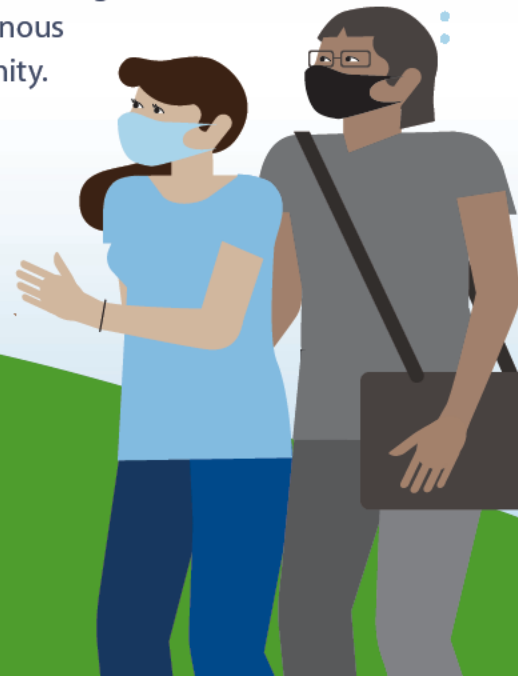
of new hires were  
visible diversity

In June 2020, Metro Vancouver Transit Police was proud to welcome Constable Kirk Rattray into the newly created role of Indigenous Liaison Officer.

It is our hope that the position will bring collaboration and understanding that will help guide our department toward better serving the Indigenous community.



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## Offences



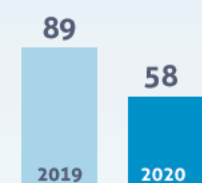
↓13%

**Crimes Against Persons**  
down by 13% from 1670 (2019)  
to 1456 (2020).



↓16%

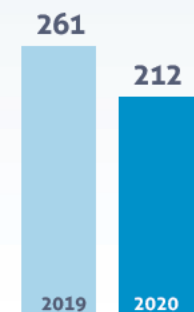
**Crimes Against Property**  
down by 16% from 1946 (2019)  
to 1635 (2020)



↓35%



**Workplace Violence Against  
Bus Operators (Assaults)**  
down from 89 (2019) to 58 (2020)



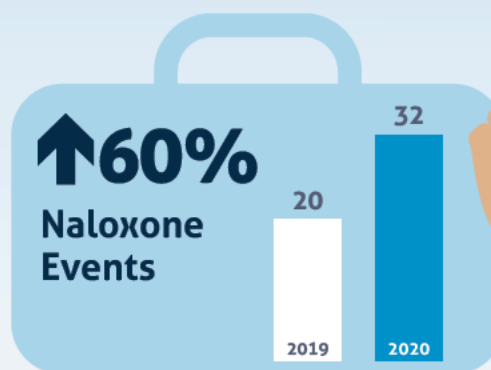
↓41%

**Sex Offences** down 41% from  
212 (2019) to 125 (2020)



228

**Mask related tickets issued**



↑60%  
**Naloxone  
Events**



↑4.8%

**Police files generated from text  
reports** up by 4.8% from 4715 (2019)  
to 4943 (2020)

**We are proud to unveil the Metro Vancouver Transit Police (MVTP) original Indigenous Art Piece that was created for our department by First Nations artist Christine Mackenzie.**

The artwork was commissioned as a visual representation of our commitment to strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities.





## 2020 Events

Despite the limitations of COVID-19, Transit Police still attended and hosted a number of events and announcements throughout the year. Below are some of the highlights from 2020.



In March 2020, several weeks before pandemic restrictions on travel and gatherings were announced, Transit Police and other law enforcement agencies participated in the annual Polar Plunge in Vancouver, raising money for Special Olympics BC.



In August 2020, Transit Police launched Phase Four of our ongoing campaign to raise awareness about sexual offending on transit. The ads were developed in partnership with students of Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School.



On Orange Shirt Day, September 30 2020, Transit Police was proud to unveil new artwork created by Indigenous artist Christine Mackenzie. The artwork represents Metro Vancouver Transit Police safely transporting and linking communities.

For more information on Transit Police's work supporting reconciliation and stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, please read our **Strengthening Transit Police Support for Indigenous Peoples Report** at <https://transitpolice.ca/news/trend-analysis-and-community-reports/>



In December 2020, Transit Police was able to recognize a number of employees for exemplary service. Examples included officers who pulled a man to safety from a burning vehicle and an off duty officer who provided CPR to a man in medical distress.

Follow us on social media for more info about monthly events and announcements



@transitpolice



@transitpolicebc



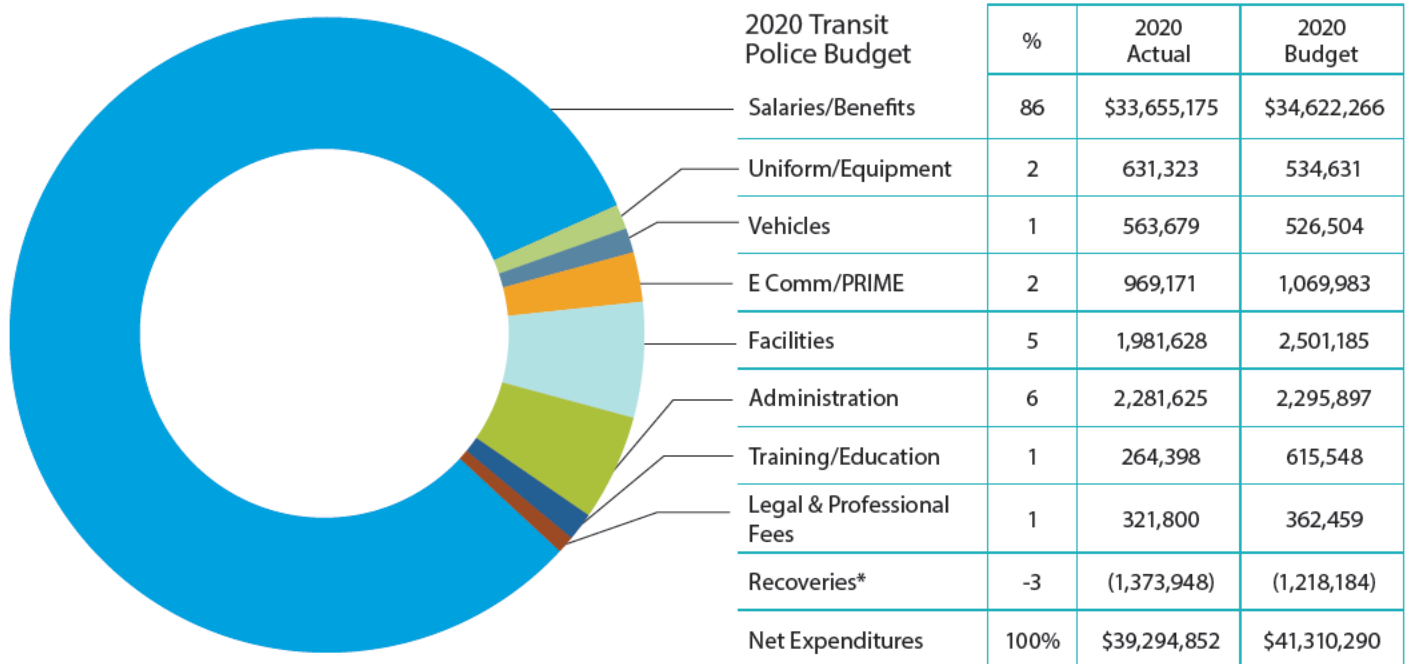
@transitpolicebc





## Financial Summary

The Transit Police budget for 2019 was \$41,310,290. Total actual expenditures were \$39,294,852. The expenditures include TransLink allocated costs of \$4,880,761 for centralized services (premises rent and information technology services).



\*Salaries represent the net costs to Metro Vancouver Transit Police after recoveries (i.e. those officers seconded and paid for by other joint police initiatives).

\*\*Transit Police salaries are consistent with those of independent municipal police agencies in Metro Vancouver.





For a complete breakdown of strategic initiatives at Metro Vancouver Transit Police in 2020, see our Strategic Plan Year End Update located at: <https://transitpolice.ca/news/strategic-plan-2016-2020/>



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