



June 26, 2020

Commissioner Thomas Carrique
Ontario Provincial Police
General Headquarters
Lincoln M. Alexander Building
777 Memorial Avenue
Orillia, ON
L3V 7V3

Dear Commissioner Carrique,

We are the Heads of Council of the Municipalities of North Huron and South Huron who continue to have grave concern respecting the decision to close satellite locations in Wingham and Exeter in favor of one central location in Clinton.

The promise made by the OPP is "To serve our province by protecting its citizens, upholding the law and preserving public safety." According to the OPP website,

"The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) commits to working continually to earn the confidence of the citizens of and visitors to Ontario - a confidence that will not be taken for granted. The OPP fulfills this commitment by providing the best and most professional service, possible, and by striving to build a culture of trust, and open and honest dialogue, with the communities it serves and among the people it employs. The organization commits to creating and sustaining a positive working environment in which all employees have equal opportunity to fulfill their potential within the profession".

It is our view that this promise cannot be upheld with the decision to close the two satellite locations.

Last week, CTV News reported a story about our concerns respecting the closures. The report included a video clip of Chief Superintendent John Cain, Regional Commander of West Region at the Clinton OPP Detachment



ground-breaking ceremony in 2018. At that time he committed “that the closed offices in Wingham and Exeter, would be replaced with smaller “storefront” policing offices which will provide an area for the officers to go and meet the public in that community, so that not everyone within Huron County would have to come to Clinton if they wanted to see an officer.” The following is a link to the news report

<https://london.ctvnews.ca/mayors-disappointed-as-opp-close-satellite-offices-in-exeter-ingham-1.4988468>.

To date, the “storefront” offices have not been opened in either community and there’s been no formal request or discussions with North Huron or South Huron about space for OPP staff and members of the public to meet. This begs the question if there was ever an intent to proceed with such a plan. It also raises the question why the existing locations couldn’t continue to be utilized.

In 2018, Chief Superintendent Cain informed the public that the Wingham and Exeter OPP offices would be replaced with satellite offices. We are not aware of any discussions to enact this plan. There have also been no consultations with North Huron or South Huron about satellite offices. Moreover, it is unknown whether the satellite office costs would be borne by the OPP or would be an additional cost to our respective municipalities. In 2018 there was no indication that the additional cost would be the responsibility of North Huron or South Huron.

North Huron and South Huron desire to work collaboratively with the OPP and this requires a high level of respect between the OPP and the two municipalities. Neither of our municipalities received formal notification of the closures. The notification was initiated by the Acting Detachment Commander via contact with municipal staff and ourselves.

The OPP’s actions regarding the closures and subsequent re-location to Clinton has not promoted the OPP in our communities. The actions of the OPP decision-makers are seen as short-sighted and call into question the OPP’s promise “To serve our province by protecting its citizens, upholding the law and preserving public safety.”



We expect that you will reach out to us to discuss options moving forward and we shall await your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Finch".

Mayor George Finch
Municipality of South Huron

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Bailey".

Reeve Bernie Bailey
Municipality of North Huron

Cc. Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General
Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister of Government and Consumer Services
North Huron Council
South Huron Council