

Passing the buck

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In a classic case of downloading from Ottawa and Victoria, municipalities are being asked to pay more for DNA crime analysis.

It's baffling that this isn't included in the current RCMP contract. At roughly \$20 million per year, policing is the biggest of big-ticket items in the two North Vancouver councils' budgets and they're growing impatient with ever-ballooning costs.

This will likely spur a closer look into whether we could be saving money or getting better service by jettisoning the RCMP in favour of a new local or regional police force.

Housing is another prime example of where costs are being downloaded. Housing is a provincial responsibility yet the city and the district are regularly allowing denser condo developments in exchange for them including non-profit or market rental housing -both things the province and the feds have largely pulled out of over the last 30 years. That foregoes money that could otherwise be invested in areas that are within municipal jurisdiction like updating old rec centres or paying for local infrastructure.

Municipalities only collect about eight cents of every tax dollar in Canada but they are the level of government closest to the people.

The needs of citizens are apparently much harder to ignore without a nice stone legislature or parliament to insulate you, and so the cities end up picking up the slack.

We urge everyone: Don't make it comfortable or easy for the feds and province to shirk their responsibilities. Give them a poke in the ribs too.

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