



NEWS RELEASE

Toronto Police Association presents at the City of Toronto's Budget Committee considering the 2024 Budget Proposal

Toronto, ON, January 22, 2024 –

Today, the Toronto Police Association presented at the City of Toronto's Budget Committee as part of its effort to raise awareness with the public and advocate for its members during the 2024 Budget process.

Using an extensive network of communications channels, the deputation is only one step in a city-wide public awareness campaign about the challenges that are facing the Toronto Police Service, members, and the city at large.

According to the presentation put forward by the Toronto Police Service:

- Between September 2022 and 2023, emergency calls for service went up 18% and it takes, on average, 22 minutes to respond to the highest priority call
- The wait time is longer in 18 of 25 municipal wards
- A recent poll by Abacus Data found that more than half of Torontonians believe the current level of policing does not meet the city's safety needs
- Almost 70% believe that increasing the number of frontline officers is key to enhancing city safety and 71% want a properly-funded and well-resourced police service.

"The residents of Toronto deserve better and without the appropriate investment in policing, the current situation will get worse," said Jon Reid, President of the TPA. "The continued underfunding has already forced our service to dissolve most of the Divisional Community Response Units and deplete units such as the Drug Squad. Next may be traffic enforcement and Neighbourhood Officers."



A full version of the submission by the Toronto Police Association is below and to see the rest of the campaign, visit KeepTorontoSafe.com.

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The Toronto Police Association represents almost 8,000 police and civilian members of the Toronto Police Service. We are a professional organization dedicated to advancing the interests of our members through education, political action, and legislative advocacy. We operate in an open, ethical, and professional manner and strive to promote professionalism and accountability within the ranks of our members. Our foremost priority is the wellbeing of our members and the community we serve.

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Deputation to the City of Toronto Budget Committee Meeting

**President Jon Reid
Toronto Police Association
January 22, 2024**

Check Against Delivery

- Good morning Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members.
- Thank you for having me here today.
- As you know, I am Jon Reid, President of the Toronto Police Association.
- For the sake of those in attendance or watching the live stream who may not know me or the Toronto Police Association... we are the Association that represents the approximately 8,000 members of the Toronto Police Service, who all serve Toronto's residents, businesses, and visitors in both sworn and civilian capacities.
- The Board of Directors and I are elected by the TPA membership. We are the public voice of our membership and have the responsibility and privilege of advocating on their behalf.
- We ask our members to provide the city with adequate and effective policing...policing that is impacted by the unique characteristics of our city.
- Unique characteristics such as policing protests and major events that are often driven by circumstances far outside of Toronto. The current conflict in the Middle East is the most recent example, sparking more than 300 demonstrations in the past few months.
- Unique characteristics like, investigating complex cases involving guns, gangs, drugs, and human trafficking, and adjusting to the ebb and



flow of crime such as the current increase of hate crimes and auto theft.

- Unique characteristics like, the volume of work associated to policing a major urban centre which is home to major league sports teams, consular offices, and welcomes almost 28 million visitors every year.
- When we ask our members to provide adequate and effective policing, the trade-off is that the city must give our members the tools and resources they need to do their job safely, and effectively.
- This is not happening.
- The TPA has engaged in an unprecedented citywide education program to ensure that all Torontonians are fully informed as to what is at stake with this year's budget.
- I know these points have been raised before but they are alarming, and worth sharing again.
- Since 2010, our city has grown by 460,000 people. That's a 13% increase in the population... while the number of our police officers has declined by almost 600 Officers.
- Our current staffing levels are unacceptable.
- Between September 2022 and 2023, emergency calls for service went up 18% and terrifyingly ...it takes us, on average, 22 minutes to respond to the highest priority call.
- The wait time is longer in 18 of 25 municipal wards.
- And 60% of the time, there are no units immediately available to respond to an emergency.
- I ask each of you here to take a moment and imagine your loved one, a daughter, son, spouse or elderly parent at home and hearing a



commotion, then the unexpected sound of glass breaking, or the front door opening... and coming to realize that someone has broken into their home. They pick up the phone to call 911... and they are put on hold. And even if they are not on hold – imagine having to wait 22 minutes for someone to show up.

- This is the reality in Toronto today. The criminals know it and your voters know it.
- We recently partnered with Abacus Data to conduct public research and polled 1,500 residents across Toronto.
- Chair and CEO of Abacus, Dr. David Coletto has joined me here today if you have questions - but here are a few highlights.
- More than half of Torontonians believe the current level of policing does NOT meet the city's safety needs.
- Almost 70% believe that increasing the number of frontline officers is key to enhancing city safety.
- And 71% want a properly-funded and well-resourced police service.
- The residents of Toronto deserve better and without the appropriate investment in policing, the current situation will get worse.
- The continued underfunding has already forced our service to dissolve most of the Divisional Community Response Units and the Chief has explained that continued frontline demands will deplete units such as the Drug Squad.
- Next may be Traffic enforcement and Neighbourhood Officers.
- How many members of Council would like to tell their constituents they did not support funding that allowed for Neighbourhood Officers or a proper investment in traffic safety?



- The budget proposed by the City of Toronto staff will not address and certainly not alleviate any of the issues I've raised today.
- On behalf of our members and the thousands of residents we have heard from throughout our campaign, there is really only one question to ask:
- Is the Mayor and City Council prepared to be responsible for fewer police officers, longer response times, and a further erosion of our collective sense of safety?
- The results of this budget process will be our answer.
- Thank you and I am happy to take your questions.