



2023 BI-ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

July - December 31, 2023



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



This was my final year on the Edmonton Police Commission after serving for six years as a commissioner, and looking back, I'm proud to say that during that time policing in this city changed for the better.

The biggest win for Edmontonians was securing adequate funding for the police budget. After nearly three years, City of Edmonton Council voted to keep the dedicated funding formula for the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) budget. Approved by Council for another three years in August 2023, this formula provides Edmontonians with a consistent, predictable, and reliable source of funding for community safety throughout our city. The formula ties the growth of Edmonton's police budget to inflation and population growth. The formula gives assurance to Edmonton's taxpayers by capping the ratio of EPS funding to City spending at 30 per cent of civic departments. This effective policy tool provides Council with peace-of-mind during the four-year budget cycle as police funding increases will not exceed increases in other areas of municipal spending. My sincere thanks and gratitude to my fellow commissioners, staff at the Commission and City, as well as the EPS for their hard work and determination to provide Edmontonians with a fair and reliable formula to fund the police service.

A lot changed at the EPS during my time as a commissioner. As a Commission, we hired the Chief of Police in 2018 and developed high-level, strategic areas of focus for the EPS. The Chief oversees the police service on an operational level, and the Commission is the governing body. We set goals for the police service which are based on evidence, leading practices, a commitment to equity and inclusion, reducing silos, improving service delivery, and providing the best outcomes for Edmontonians. We lead with a strong focus on doing things differently to achieve better results for taxpayers. We hired Chief Dale McFee to bring change to the programming and culture of the EPS, as well as to take a different approach to how the police service interacted with Edmontonians.

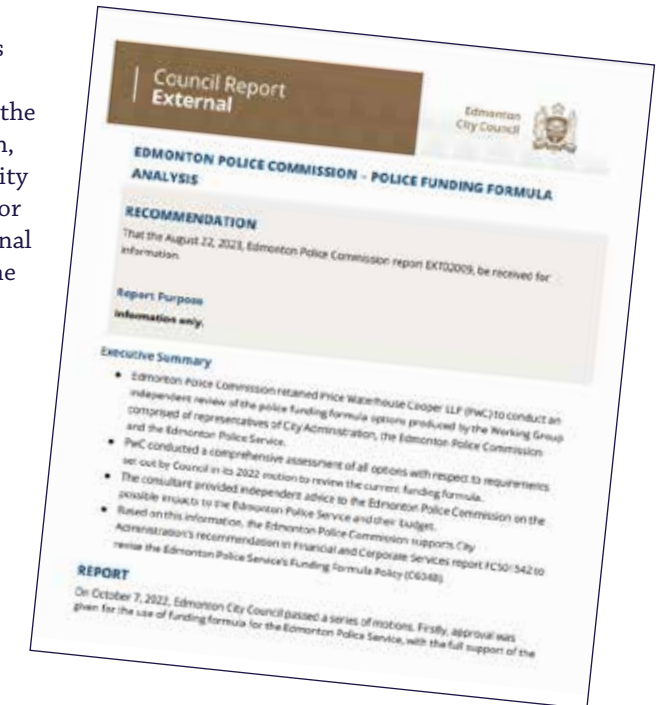
I'm pleased to say that the EPS is now an organization that has fully committed to innovation, collaboration, partnerships, community, and building systems which provide alternatives to the justice system where it is safe and appropriate. After a comprehensive organizational review of EPS called Vision 2020, Chief McFee sought to transform the EPS into a police service which balances traditional law enforcement with community safety and well-being. This organizational realignment and restructuring touched nearly all parts of the police service, and the EPS made considerable achievements in rolling out new programs, initiatives and processes that improved the core policing functions and service to the community, including Vision 2020, 2020 Provincial Standards Audit, DiversionFirst

program, Know Your Rights Campaign, Commitment to Action, Firearms Initiative, the Commission's Strategic Plan, and participated with the City of Edmonton on the Safer for All Report. This organizational change was supported by the Commission and created a police service that partners with the community to reduce the demand for service and stop the arrest/remand/release cycle. Vision 2020 began a comprehensive redesign and restructuring of the EPS to focus on outcomes-based results that change how policing services were being delivered.

High-level outcomes of Vision 2020 included improved cross-departmental collaboration across policing bureaus, reducing barriers and redundancies, reducing public demand, developing a referral pathway, and diverting offenders from the criminal justice system when appropriate.

While these major accomplishments have contributed greatly to the EPS, there is still much work ongoing to transform policing in Edmonton and I leave the Commission having made a positive impact on the city we have dedicated our time and efforts to support.

Erick Ambtman, Chair, Edmonton Police Commission



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



With a visible increase in disorder on our city's streets and in places like parks, pedways, and transit stations, the last half of 2023 saw the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) renew a targeted focus on brazen violent crime and growing victimization citywide.

In the fall, we announced our Safer Public Spaces approach on the principle that public spaces must be maintained for the safe and appropriate use of all and should be free of disorder and criminal activity, including open-air drug use. There is a nexus between the drug trade and many of the unpredictable and often violent behaviours we see on our streets, and no Edmontonian should be at risk or fearful when simply going about their day.

Though there are many underlying social factors contributing to these issues, this is first and foremost a public safety concern. Where the accountability of the justice system is needed, it is applied, but for those who are victimized and need supports, we continue to exercise empathy through programs like HELP, PACT, and the Integrated Care Centre. The key is balance to support the victimized, effect change on the unacceptable behaviours, and hold those responsible for the drug trade and resulting crime and violence accountable.

At the same time, we have put more resources into dealing with brazen gun and gang violence. Not only has our Firearms Examination Unit, which was recently stood up in 2021, proved to be an invaluable asset for investigators, but the growth of our Guns and Gangs Unit has put criminals on notice: their business and behaviour will not be tolerated in Edmonton. To that end, myself and Police Chiefs across Canada have spent a large part of 2023 advocating for bail reform so that these prolific, violent offenders stay off our streets.

These actions occurred on the backdrop of other high-profile changes to our resource deployment aimed at addressing growing service demands. In addition to increasing the size of our recruit classes, we have redeployed frontline resources through the new patrol 10-squad model, Healthy Streets Operations Centre, and Transit Community Safety teams. The provincial government has also committed to helping us hire an additional 50 officers for high-crime areas, and we have already started making allotments in our upcoming recruit classes.

These changes are helping our efforts to curb crime and violence, but there is still more to do. Looking into 2024, I am hopeful that we will begin to see and feel the impact of these actions, but that requires upholding the same persistence and urgency we began with. Edmontonians have made it clear they are concerned about the violence, crime, and disorder on our streets, and the EPS has reconfirmed its commitment to making the city safer for all.

I would like to acknowledge the support the Edmonton Police Commission provided this past year. Together, we ensured the EPS continued to use its resources in the most effective ways, even when challenged by unacceptable levels of crime and violence. Most notably, the Commission worked closely with City administration to gain City Council's approval of a new funding formula, providing the certainty and stability needed to strategically place and plan for resources rather than having to make reactive, abrupt shifts in operations.

Lastly, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to out-going chair Erick Ambtman and vice chair Aneela Hussainaly, who provided exceptional leadership during their tenure with the Commission.

Dale McFee, Chief, Edmonton Police Service

COMMISSIONERS

The Edmonton Police Commission consists of two city councillors and 11 appointed citizens who live and work in our community and represent the views of all Edmontonians on policing matters.



ERICK AMBTMAN, CHAIR

Mr. Ambtman holds degrees in Economics from the University of Manitoba and the London School of Economics. He worked as the Executive Director of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in Calgary, Rocky Mountain House, Red Deer and Fort McMurray. He completed an internship in South Africa working for a social housing company doing community development. Erick has also been the Executive Director of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers and is currently the Executive Director for Poverty Edmonton. He has been the chair of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies, the vice-chair of the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, board member of the Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance, the Alberta representative on the National Settlement Council and member of Edmonton's Vital Signs Committee.



JOHN MCDUGALL, PAST CHAIR

Mr. McDougall joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1989 as an Army Medical Technician and has served at a variety of bases across Canada. He completed his physician assistant training and has received his Masters from University of Nebraska Medical Centre specializing in Emergency Medicine and Hyperbaric Medicine. John worked his way from a Private to the highest rank a noncommissioned officer can reach, Chief Warrant Officer and was recently promoted to Major. John has been a very active advocate for LBGTQ2+ rights in the community and in the CAF and has been a very active and constant advocate. In 2013 he raised the Pride Flag at CFB Edmonton, a first for any military base. He currently serves at the LBGTQ2+ advisor to 3 Canadian Division, the Army of the West. John has also sat on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Association of Physician Assistants (CAPA) as well as director of volunteers for the Edmonton Pride Board.



ANEELA HUSSAINALY, VICE CHAIR

Aneela Hussainaly is a management consultant turned entrepreneur who completed her Bachelor of Science in Materials Engineering at the University of Alberta followed by a Master's degree in Business Administration from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Aneela spent ten years as a senior managing consultant at IBM Canada focused on strategy with the Global Business Services unit before launching her career in the field of early learning and childhood development. In addition to her role on the Edmonton Police Commission, she served as a member of the Board of Directors for the TELUS World of Science Edmonton from 2012-2018 and currently serves a national member for the Ismaili Council for Canada.



KEMI KUFUOR-BOAKYE

Kemi is currently an Executive Director of Budget Development and Systems for Treasury Board and Finance at the Government of Alberta. In this role, she provides strategic options, recommendations and advice to ministries in all areas of budgeting, forecasting, spending and business planning. Additionally, Kemi supports the development and implementation of ministry budgets, monitoring achievements through quarterly and annual reports. She leads and coaches a management team to enhance government budget and business planning processes through effective collaboration.

She is a graduate of the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Commerce degree and holds the designation of Chartered Professional Accountant and Certified Internal Auditor. Kemi is passionate about community service and is a current Vice President on the Board of the YWCA Edmonton.

As a black woman, she brings diverse perspectives and lived experiences to the table, ensuring that the board reflects the diversity of the community it serves. This representation is essential for making inclusive and equitable decisions that consider the needs of all community members.

COMMISSIONERS



SHAZIA AMIRI

Shazia Amiri has a bachelor's degree in Social Work from the University of Manitoba. She is a Registered Social Worker with the Alberta College of Social Workers and throughout her career has worked in various non-profits agencies, such as E4C, Boyle McCauley Health Centre, and Boyle Street Community Services as well as with the Edmonton Police Service working collaboratively with members on the Heavy Users of Service (HUoS) project. She has worked for the Government of Alberta since 2015 within the Ministry of Community and Social Services for the AISH program and Disability Services and currently, for the Ministry of Children's Services. Within Children's Services, she has held various positions working with high-risk youth, completing community assessments, as well as completing investigations for children in care.



IRFAN CHAUDHRY

Irfan Chaudhry has been working in the area of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) since 2011. He currently works as Director, Office of Human Rights, Diversity, and Equity at MacEwan University. He has held numerous roles within the EDI space including the City of Edmonton's Racism Free Edmonton project and the Edmonton Local Immigration Partnership; advisory positions with the Edmonton Police Service Chief of Police Diversity Recruitment Committee and Chief of Police Community Advisory Committee; the Alberta Hate Crimes Committee, as well as committee roles with Public Safety Canada's Expert Committee on Countering Radicalization to Violence. Chaudhry has a bachelor's degree in Sociology and master's in criminal justice from the University of Alberta.



ANNE-MARIE LAMBERT

Anne-Marie Lambert has resided in Edmonton since 2011, when she transferred here as an Intelligence Officer with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry from the University of Saskatchewan and Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in Criminology from Simon Fraser University, followed by over 14 years with CSIS, including time as Chief of the Edmonton District Office. Currently the Director of Security at West Edmonton Mall, Anne-Marie is also enthusiastic about teaching future law enforcement personnel about social justice in her third year criminology class at Lethbridge College.



DAVID SOWEMIMO

David Sowemimo is a practicing lawyer at the law firm of James H. Brown & Associates. He earned his Bachelor of Arts (Advanced) and Juris Doctor (J.D.) degrees from the University of Manitoba before moving to Edmonton and completing his articles. He was called to the Alberta bar in 2016 and is a member of the Alberta Civil Trial Lawyers Association. David was a finalist in the Canadian Lawyer magazine's Top 25 Most Influential Lawyers 2020 award and believes in giving back to the community. In 2021, he created an entrance scholarship for black law students at the University of Manitoba Faculty of Law. David provides mentorship for young professionals and volunteers for various organizations, including the Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council.

COMMISSIONERS



WALLY SINCLAIR

Wally Sinclair was raised in Lesser Slave Lake, Alberta, and is a member of the Sawridge First Nations. A veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, Wally has significant experience as a community development practitioner in many areas including employment, social services and addictions counseling. He completed the Local Government Professional Certification and Professional Certification in Addictions and Therapy programs at the University of Alberta. Wally is an Ambassador to Commanding Officer Royal Canadian Mounted Police K Division, the active chair of Lac La Biche Youth Justice, is an Elder at the Lac La Biche Canadian Native Friendship Centre and was recently appointed to the Alberta Health Services Indigenous Wisdom Council.



DR. MICHAEL LEE

Dr. Michael Lee operates a private practice in general dentistry in Edmonton and is an avid volunteer. Dr. Lee has lectured at the University of Alberta, and is a member of the Canadian Dental Association, and the Alberta Dental Association and its Disciplinary Committee. He is a Fellow of the International College of Dentists and the Academy of Dentistry International. Dr. Lee is Chair of the Greater Edmonton Chinese Community Foundation, Treasurer and founding member of the Guizhou Rose Society, and Vice Chair of the Edmonton Chinese Benevolent Association. He has previously held various leadership roles in various community organizations, including Chairperson of the Edmonton Chinese Benevolent Association, and National Director of the National Congress of Canadian Chinese.



DR. JAYAN NAGENDRAN

Dr. Jayan Nagendran is a cardiac surgeon clinician-scientist and the Director of the Division of Cardiac Surgery at the University of Alberta (U of A), as well as the Surgical Director of Lung Transplantation for Alberta Health Services. He was born and raised in Edmonton and received his MD in 2001, and his PhD from the Department of Medicine in 2009 from the U of A. He completed his residency in Cardiac Surgery at the U of A, and then received sub-specialty training in heart and lung transplantation at Stanford University from 2009 to 2011 prior to joining the Department of Surgery at the U of A in 2011 and has been an Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery since 2017. Dr. Nagendran is the Director of Research for the Division of Cardiac Surgery with a productive preclinical research laboratory studying Ex-Vivo Lung Perfusion, and ongoing clinical research investigations by creating the Division of Cardiac Surgery Research Office. Dr. Nagendran is a full-time surgeon performing around 200 open heart surgeries per year in Edmonton and is a serial entrepreneur. He is a strong advocate of healthcare and access to healthcare. Dr. Nagendran is proud to call Edmonton his home and wishes a bright future for all who live in our communities. He feels privileged to serve as a member of the Edmonton Police Commission.



COUNCILLOR ANNE STEVENSON

Anne Stevenson was elected to City Council Ward O-day'min in October 2021 and brings her experience as an urban planner who is passionate about building an equitable city that serves all residents. Following an undergraduate in international development and economics at Trent University, she went on to complete a master's in city design at the London School of Economics. She spent seven years working at the City of Edmonton and volunteering on affordable housing and social research initiatives. In 2019, Anne joined Right at Home Housing Society, where she worked to provide affordable housing solutions to meet the diverse needs of our community before being elected to Council.



COUNCILLOR SARAH HAMILTON

Sarah Hamilton is the City Councillor for Edmonton's Ward sipiwiyiniwak. She has worked as an educator, journalist, small business owner, and in various public service oriented roles in provincial and municipal government. In her role with the Minister of Health, Sarah worked on several projects such as the Southwest Wellness Initiative, which sought to bring together wellness strategies at different levels of government. As an adjunct professor in Chicago, she taught Media Studies and Communications, working with students from diverse backgrounds to help develop their communication and critical thinking skills. Most recently, Sarah founded and operated SPARROW Communications & Public Relations, working with several non-profit businesses throughout Edmonton.

COMMISSION REPORTING

PUBLIC MEETINGS

For the period July 1 to December 31, 2023 the Edmonton Police Commission held four public meetings at City Hall. The Commission meets on the third Thursday of every month in the River Valley Room starting at noon. The Commission provides advance notice of upcoming meetings through the media and online on our website at edmontonpolicecommission.com. Agendas reports and minutes of those meetings are also available on the Commission's website.

The Commission welcomes both media and public guests to attend meetings and/or make a presentation to the Commission.

The Commission receives presentations from EPS and community agencies on various topics. For July 1 to December 31, 2023, topics included:

- Integrated Offender Management
- Healthy Streets Operation Centre
- Professional Standards Branch
- Rezoning Downtown Division Boundaries
- Fleet Management Optimization
- Traffic Services Branch
- Citizen Perception Survey
- Y:FIVE-O Unit & RELENTLES Outreach
- Criminal Flight Events Analysis



Guardian of Public Trust

COMMISSION REPORTING

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Commission work is supported by five standing committees that meet several times a year: Human Resources, Finance & Audit, Governance, Professional Standards, and Technology Committee. Ad hoc committees are created as needed, such as a search committee for hiring a new Chief of Police or Internal Auditor.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Governance Committee is to provide a focus on governance that will enhance performance for both the Commission and the EPS. The primary purpose of the Governance Committee is to consider and recommend actions and propose policies that are in alignment with the Commission's and Service's strategic plans, priority areas and strategic goals.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Human Resources Committee is to provide a focus on areas of human resources that will enhance performance for both the Commission and Service. The primary purpose of this committee is to consider and recommend actions and propose policies that are in alignment with recruitment and retention, succession planning, performance planning, and review.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Finance & Audit Committee is responsible to assist the Commission in fulfilling its obligations and oversight responsibilities related to - Financial Planning and Reporting; the Audit Process; Internal Controls; and Risk Management. The committee makes recommendations to the Commission for approval when required.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Professional Standards Committee is to monitor and oversee the public complaint process. While the Service is responsible for investigating complaints, the committee and the Public Complaint Director ensure investigations are thorough, fair to all parties, and are conducted in accordance with laws and policies.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Technology Committee assists and advises the EPS in fulfilling governance responsibilities with respect to information technology and technology projects. The Committee also assists the police with establishing strategic plans, principles, and policies relevant to the adoption of information technology and other technology.

Inspiring trust and innovation in policing and community safety through effective oversight

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORTING

FINANCIALS

EDMONTON POLICE COMMISSION

BUDGET VARIANCE BY MAJOR CATEGORY FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023 (\$000'S)

	CURRENT PERIOD *			
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	%
POLICE COMMISSION	1,409,354	1,639,361	(230,007)	-16%
Hourly /Support	-	41,505	(41,505)	
Salaries	639,514	682,830	(43,315)	-7%
Benefits	131,928	124,749	7,179	5%
Employee Allowances	10,540	10,666	(126)	-1%
Overtime	5,000	586	4,414	88%
PERSONNEL	786,982	872,827	(85,845)	-11%
Materials & Supplies	2,290	5,615	(3,325)	-145%
Vehicle Costs	-	-	-	
Furniture & Equipment	3,200	23,577	(20,377)	-637%
Contract & Services	368,552	450,000	(81,448)	-22%
Building Costs	142,810	125,000	17,810	12%
Internal Services & Recoveries	-	973	(973)	
Travel & Training	86,520	110,000	(23,480)	-27%
Other General Costs	19,000	19,000	-	0%
NON PERSONNEL	622,372	734,164	(111,792)	-18%
TOTAL	1,409,354	1,639,361	(230,007)	-16%

EXPENSES

FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023

	M. Barker	E. Ambtman	A. Hussainaly	S. Amiri	D. Sowemimo	J. McDougall	W. Sinclair	M. Lee	A-M. Lambert	I. Chaudhry	K. Kufuor-Boakye	J.Nagendran	A. Stevenson	S. Hamilton
Conferences		\$10,880.29	\$11,108.59	\$6,202.01	\$0.00	\$5,094.90	\$7,689.98	\$1,023.50	\$8,242.01	\$5,250.38	\$1,927.50	\$327.67	\$0.00	\$425.00
Hosting	\$355.60													
TOTAL	\$355.60	\$10,880.29	\$10,783.96	\$6,021.40	\$-	\$4,918.90	\$7,689.98	\$862.50	\$5,633.54	\$5,142.18	\$1,887.50	\$300.00	\$-	\$425.00

COMMISSIONER MEETING ATTENDANCE RECORD

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023

COMMISSIONER	# COMMISSION MEETINGS ATTENDED
ERICK AMBTMAN, CHAIR	8/8
ANEELA HUSSAINALY, VICE CHAIR	7/8
JOHN MCDOUGALL	8/8
SHAZIA AMIRI	8/8
IRFAN CHAUDHRY	7/8
DAVID SOWEMIMO	8/8
ANNE-MARIE LAMBERT	6/8
MICHAEL LEE*	5/5
JODI CALAHOO-STONEHOUSE*	2/2
KEMI KUFUOR-BOAKYE	7/8
WALTER SINCLAIR	5/8
SARAH HAMILTON	8/8
JAYAN NAGENDRAN*	2/3
ANNE STEVENSON	8/8

*Outgoing & Incoming Commissioners

STATUTORY DECISIONS

In the second half of 2023, the Commission made statutory decisions and provided written reasons to the parties on the following types of statutory matters:

s. 44(3) policy/service appeals	2
s. 43(8) frivolous/vexatious complaints	0
Complaints against the Chief of Police	5
s. 7(4) retroactive extension requests	0
s. 43(12)(b)(ii) reviews of Commission decisions	0

COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

GLOBAL NEWS MORNING APPEARANCE



Chair Erick Ambtman was live on air with Global News Morning, July 27, 2023.

COMMISSIONERS



L-R: (Back) John McDougall, Irfan Chaudhry, Coun. Sarah Hamilton, Dr. Jay Nagendran, Elder Wally Sinclair and Chair Erick Ambtman. (Front) David Sowemimo, Vice Chair Aneela Hussainaly, Anne-Marie Lambert, Shazia Amiri, Coun. Anne Stevenson, and Dr. Michael Lee. Not present: Kemi Kufuor-Boakye.

EDMONTON JOURNAL ARTICLE



Chair Erick Ambtman sat down for an interview on public safety with writer Keith Gerein of the Edmonton Journal.

RTC 157 GRADUATION



Chair Erick Ambtman gives a speech during the Recruit Training Class 157 graduation ceremony.



Chair Erick Ambtman (third from right) inspects Recruit Training Class 157 with other dignitaries.

EPS FINANCIAL REPORTING

CAPITAL BUDGET

2023-2026 (\$000'S)

	2023	2024	2025	2026	TOTAL
APPROVED CAPITAL BUDGET					
Renewal	\$17,542	\$22,171	\$12,569	\$10,735	\$63,018
Growth	\$12,402	\$3,850	\$2,070	\$2,135	\$20,457
TOTAL	\$29,944	\$26,021	\$14,639	\$12,870	\$83,475

Approved 2023-2024 Capital Budget as of December 2023 includes additional \$10.610 million for renewal profiles in 2024, 2023 Fall Supplemental Capital Budget Adjustment and 2022 budget carryforwards.

2025 - 2026 renewal profiles (excluding Vehicles profile) are funded at 25% of Edmonton Police Commission supported and recommended capital budget.

Does not include the Police Headquarters Rehabilitation, Integrated Infrastructure Services profile of \$13.575 million as shown on the City of Edmonton Approved Budget document.

OPERATING BUDGET, EXPENDITURES

2023-2026 (\$000'S)

	2023	2024	2025	2026
Edmonton Police Service, Expenditures	\$501,071	\$537,247	\$542,646	\$546,433
City of Edmonton, Total Expenditures	\$3,403,600	\$3,483,990	\$3,619,563	\$3,736,472
PERCENT OF EPS EXPENDITURES TO COE TOTAL EXPENDITURES	14.7%	15.4%	15.0%	14.6%

Edmonton Police Service Expenditures and City of Edmonton Total Expenditures for 2023-2026 as per City of Edmonton Approved Budget in December 2023.

On August 23, 2023, City Council approved the revised Edmonton Police Service Funding Formula Policy which resulted in new funding to be allocated for 2024-2026 EPS operations.

EPS BODY WORN CAMERAS TRIAL

In response to the provincial mandate of implementing body worn cameras (BWC) across police services in Alberta, EPS began a trial to test the new technology with a small group of officers.

The six-month trial began in July 2023 with 35 officers from the Healthy Streets Operations Centre (HSOC), Transit and Community Safety (TRACS), and the High Risk Encampment Team (HRET) wearing the cameras and recording public interactions.

The increased public interaction within these areas provides a unique opportunity for EPS to assess the technological and operational impacts, as well as identify gaps and improve processes, before rolling out the cameras servicewide.

“We’ve heard from many of our members that they are looking forward to wearing cameras and are hopeful that it will improve officer safety by affecting the behavior of the individuals they interact with and subsequently deescalating situations,” said Superintendent Derek McIntyre with the EPS Crime Suppression and Investigations Division.

The goals of BWCs are multifaceted, but the overall aim is to create a more efficient accountability process and reduce use of force incidents for both officers and the public. Because of the objectivity of BWC video, it is anticipated that its use will increase transparency, reduce unfounded allegations of misconduct, enhance officer accountability and professionalism, and increase public trust and confidence in police.

“Video can be a helpful and beneficial tool for all parties in police interactions and will hopefully also assist investigators by improving evidence collection, documentation, early case resolution and successful prosecution.”

Citizens interacting with officers involved in the trial will notice a small camera affixed to the front of their uniforms. Officers will begin recording when they start a public interaction for an investigation or when asking questions for the purpose of collecting information. While not legally required to do so, officers will do their best to advise citizens when they are being recorded.

The camera will be turned off at the conclusion of an officer’s interaction with the public or when they determine that continuous recording is no longer serving its intended purpose. At the end of every shift, officers will dock their cameras and footage will automatically be uploaded to a designated secure storage location. Recorded data cannot be altered or deleted at any time, and all footage will be logged and submitted as part of disclosure to the Crown when charges are laid.

Body worn cameras are subject to Sections 33C and 33B of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act which authorizes the collection of information from the public. The Health Information Act will also apply when officers are present in healthcare facilities.

Superintendent McIntyre adds, “We understand the public may have privacy concerns regarding body worn camera use and we want to assure citizens that all draft EPS policy, procedure and training related to the cameras incorporates and speaks to the applicable legislation.”

The EPS ran a body worn camera trial project from October 2011 through December 2014, with operational testing in a variety of environments to assess its value and capabilities. At that time, the project indicated there were several concerns with the technology, data management, and impact on complaints and use of force incidents. Since then, advancements have improved the technology and it is now better suited to the operational and investigative needs of policing.



The trial provides EPS with a snapshot of how to best implement BWC based on a number of police interactions in complex environments with citizens from various communities.

FUNDING FOR MORE OFFICERS

On December 12, 2023, the Government of Alberta announced \$8.3 million in funding for the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) to hire 50 new police officers.

The funding follows a government commitment earlier in the year to help the province's big cities respond to increasing crime and disorder on downtown streets and public transit.

"These additional resources will help us to gather what we need to get ahead of the concerning spike in crime and particularly violent crime that we are witnessing in areas like our downtown core and transit stations across Edmonton," said Police Chief Dale McFee.

The average crime severity index in downtown Edmonton had increased 29 per cent from July to December 2022, driven primarily by an increase in serious criminal offences, in particular second-degree murder, assault causing bodily harm with a weapon, robbery, and aggravated assault. LRT and transit centres also experienced a rise in criminal activity, with a 75 per cent increase in violent criminal incidents between July 2022 and January 2023.

"Our government will do whatever it takes to address the concerning escalating crime rates, particularly in vital areas like public transit and the downtown core where social disorder is prevalent," said Mike Ellis, Minister of Alberta Public Safety and Emergency Services. "This funding will help strengthen the capabilities of law enforcement and make sure they have the necessary tools and personnel to improve public safety and fight criminals who continue to prey on vulnerable residents."

As a stopgap measure to target crimes in affected areas, EPS redeployed police officers to support the Transit Community Safety Teams (TRACS) and the Healthy Streets Operations Centre, which were supplemented by the Alberta Sheriffs in the short term.

The \$8.3 million in provincial funding has been designated for recruiting, training, and deploying the additional officers needed to support these efforts. The funding will also help pay for officer salaries and benefits, and the equipment needed to support them such as vehicles, uniforms, radios, and body worn cameras.



"We have redeployed our frontline resources to places like transit and the downtown and have increased recruit class sizes to get ahead of service demands, and these additional officers are the next step in tackling Edmonton's high-crime areas," added Chief McFee. "These are much-needed resources, and though hiring and training will take time, we know their presence will accelerate our existing efforts. We are grateful for the funding and support and look forward to the impact the officers will have on our streets."

EPS is actively recruiting new police officers and increasing class sizes for this initiative. For more information on a career with EPS, please visit [JoinEPS.ca](https://www.joineps.ca).

Coun. Sarah Hamilton and Chair Erick Ambtman attended the announcement alongside Chief Dale McFee and Minister Mike Ellis.

"The Edmonton Police Commission has advocated for police funding necessary to address the myriad community safety issues facing our city, and we appreciate the provincial government making good on its commitment to fund 50 additional frontline officers. This investment will help support the police service's long-term strategy of making our streets safer."

Erick Ambtman, Chair, Edmonton Police Commission

HELP NOW AVAILABLE CITYWIDE

In January 2021, the Human-centred Engagement and Liaison Partnership Unit (HELP) was launched in downtown Edmonton with the vision of diverting vulnerable individuals from unnecessary involvement with the criminal justice system and into the social supports they require.

HELP teams are made up of EPS officers and social agency navigators who engage directly with vulnerable individuals and enable frontline Patrol officers to concentrate on crime and public safety responsibilities.

HELP utilizes a triage system to manage the complex needs of those struggling with addictions, mental health issues, and houselessness. In the short term, HELP teams work to stabilize individuals and set goals appropriate to their situation and transition them to longer term community programs that provide addictions support, medical care, housing, employment, or other resources.

With Government of Alberta funding in 2023, HELP was able to expand across Edmonton to all six EPS Patrol branches and provide support to the community seven days a week.

The new HELP branch teams have been hard at work in 2023, and had 4,198 interactions with vulnerable individuals, were the primary responders to 1,378 calls for service, completed 943 consultations offering advice and resources, and provided 579 on-scene assists to Patrol officers.

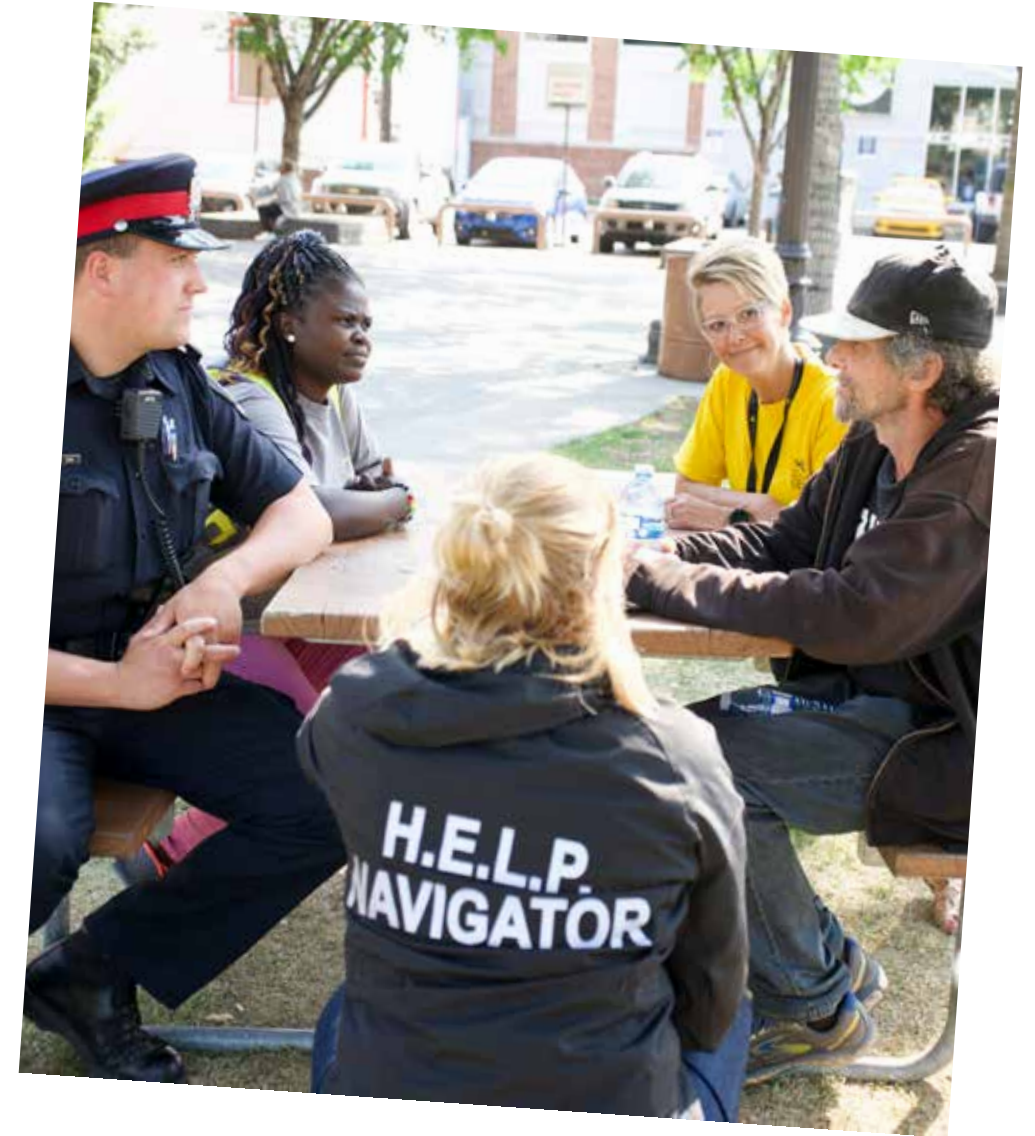
For individuals requiring additional stabilization and supports to reduce interactions with police, cases are transitioned to the CORE HELP team, and in 2023 they received 260 referrals and accepted 138 individuals for short-term case management (three to six months).

The expansion of HELP citywide is crucial to creating Safer Public Spaces and would not be possible without the collaboration and dedication of EPS's social agency partners: The Mustard Seed, George Spady Society, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Radius Community Health and Healing, and Hope Mission.

While this work is very challenging, it is also very rewarding, because it is making a real difference in the lives of the city's most vulnerable.

Special thanks to the many compassionate EPS and a agency staff who are helping to provide this new level of service to the community.

For more information about HELP, please visit edmontonpolice.ca/HELP.



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION DAY 2023

Orange shirts brightened an otherwise soggy day as the Edmonton Police Service honoured the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The EPS Community Relations Section hosted a public event in support of this important day of healing in Churchill Square on Friday, September 29, 2023. Warmed by soup and fresh bannock, officers and guests took part in a smudging and prayer ceremony led by Elder Wendy Ryan from the Sunchild First Nation. This was followed by performances by powwow dancers, a powwow drum group, crafts, and a demonstration of traditional Indigenous games.



EPS GRADUATIONS

EPS WELCOMES NEW CONSTABLES

Chief Dale McFee officially welcomed 35 new constables to the EPS ranks as they graduated from Recruit Training Class (RTC) 157. Their many accomplishments during class and volunteering in the community were celebrated at RTC 157's formal graduation ceremony at City Hall on October 27, 2023. With the completion of their academic training, the new constables now move into field development with EPS Patrol Branch.



EXPERIENCED OFFICERS JOIN EPS

The Edmonton Police Service has always been recognized as a leader in policing and attracts police officers from other agencies across the country. Because of their previous law enforcement experience, these officers participate in accelerated 5-week training in the EPS Experienced Officer Program (EOP) compared to the 27-week training for new recruits. EOP Class 16 completed their training and were sworn in at Northwest Campus on July 14, 2023, and EOP Class 17 on November 24, 2023. Deputy Chief Darren Derko welcomed the new officers to EPS Patrol, "Thank you for choosing us. I know you are going to have a long, very rewarding career with the service."



HSOC MAKES PROGRESS

The Healthy Streets Operations Centre (HSOC) continues to make progress addressing safety concerns in the downtown core while ensuring that those who need help are getting access to important social services.

The pilot project was launched in October 2022 with the goal of reducing high levels of crime, disorder, and victimization in the Chinatown, Downtown, and Kingsway areas.

In recent years, these neighbourhoods have struggled with increasing homelessness, open air drug use, vandalism, violence, personal robberies, and property crimes.

The urgent needs of the community required an innovative, multidisciplinary approach that allowed organizations with the appropriate authority to take the lead in solving specific problems, with partner organizations ready to step in to provide overlapping support where needed.

Building on the successes of previous social policing collaborations, Community Safety Teams were created that brought together the expertise of Edmonton Police Service Officers, City of Edmonton Community Safety Liaisons, City Community Peace Officers, Edmonton Fire Rescue Services Safety Officers, Alberta Health Services Paramedics, and Alberta Sheriffs.

Members of the Community Safety Teams met regularly with residents and business owners in the affected communities to identify safety issues and offer a range of data-driven solutions. Their ongoing community engagement, visible presence on the streets, and coordination of services, made a significant impact on the safety and well-being of the affected neighbourhoods.

Through the proactive patrols and crime suppression efforts of the Edmonton Police and Alberta Sheriffs, violent crimes were reduced by 43 per cent and other crimes by 27 per cent in one year, and residents reported feeling safer after dark as well.

Because HSOC balances enforcement with support, these areas not only saw a decrease in crime, but an increase in the number of vulnerable individuals accepting offers of social, health, and housing assistance. Approximately 63 per cent of these referrals were for treatment of addictions and Opioid dependency.

Quite often, teams would come upon Opioid overdoses or other emergencies requiring lifesaving interventions. With paramedics on the teams, they intervened in approximately 244 overdoses, provided medical treatment for 647 individuals, and diverted 381 ambulances.

The firefighters on the team also focused on the health and safety of vulnerable individuals, specifically on the risks posed from open fires and makeshift propane heaters used to keep warm, which had already resulted in several fatal explosions and blazes.

Whether interacting with the homeless, or residents and businesses, team members got to know the community quite well. This led to the development of numerous successful initiatives, including the monthly Benefits Day deployment, where HSOC members set out to create a safe space for vulnerable individuals trying to cash their monthly government assistance. These efforts not only resulted in individuals feeling safer, but also provided increased opportunities for team members to provide referrals to services.

While the pilot project concludes at the end of 2024, HSOC has demonstrated the value of its strategic partnerships to solve complex problems, assist with neighbourhood revitalization, and improve the overall quality of life within the community.

For more information, please visit edmonton.ca/healthystreets.



“Since being redeployed, EPS officers have worked closely with the community, businesses, and partners to address safety issues that make Downtown, Chinatown, and Kingsway disproportionately hard hit by crime, victimization, and disorder. There is still much more work to do, but we are encouraged by what we are beginning to see. A multiagency approach like this is key to navigating the many intersections of health, law, and social support. You cannot have well-being without safety, which is why the right partnerships are critical to success.”

Dale McFee, Chief, Edmonton Police Service



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Edmonton Police Commission and Edmonton Police Service publish a number of reports that provide further details on policing in Edmonton.

COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS:

- Bi-Annual Reports to the Community
- Professional Standards Reports
- Strategic Planning Reports
- Citizen Survey Results

EPS PUBLICATIONS:

- Approved Operating Budgets
- Annual Policing and Business Plans
- Control Tactics Reports
- Criminal Flight Reports
- Response Times and Dispatch Call Volumes

These and other publications can be found at edmontonpolicecommission.ca and edmontonpolice.ca.

The Edmonton Police Service's website includes a [Community Safety Data Portal](#) to enable the public to take an active role in community safety and crime prevention. This interactive platform provides access to data including crime statistics and trends occurring in Edmonton. It offers increased transparency into policing activities and encourages public engagement.

The City of Edmonton also has a public citizen dashboard that gives Edmontonians access to the latest data on a wide range of municipal services. Several are related to policing such as Crime Severity Index, Safe City measures, and Vehicle Collision rates. The Dashboard is available at edmonton.ca/city-government/citizen-dashboard-city-by-the-numbers.



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