MEMORANDUM TO CITY COUNCIL

FROM THE CALGARY POLICE COMMISSION

ISC: UNCLASSIFIED

FURTHER INFORMATION ON PROPOSED 2027-2030 POLICE BUDGET REQUEST

DATE:	SEPTEMBER 25, 2026	
PURPOSE:	☒ FOR INFORMATION	☐ OTHER:
APPROVED BY:	AMTUL SIDDIQUI, COMMISSION CHAIR	

REASON FOR THIS MEMORANDUM

Following the in-camera meeting with Council on July 28, 2026, this memorandum contains additional information to help respond to the questions that were raised about the proposed 2027-2030 police budget. An overview of the police budget request that the Commission plans to provide to the public to support transparency is also attached.

DISCUSSION

As was outlined in a July 13, 2026, memorandum to Council, the 2027-2030 police business plan and budget is a forward-looking budget that centres on providing more patrol officers to the frontline and ensuring they have the tools, infrastructure and support to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

It is also a catch up budget. The number of police officers per 100,000 Calgarians is approximately 15% lower now than it was a decade ago. Since 2019, police staffing has also grown at a 40% lower rate than the rest of the City of Calgary Administration. The impacts of this are now showing through noticeably reduced service levels, decreased employee retention, and more employees on medical leave and accommodation.

How the Budget was Developed

The typical process for developing the police budget starts with Council setting its overall strategic priorities and a funding envelope for the entire municipality. The Commission and Calgary Police Service (the Service) then work in consultation with City Administration to develop a proposed budget for Council's review and approval.

This year, the Commission followed a similar process to Council. The various units of the Service submitted every budget request and the Commission and Service leadership then worked together to cut items out of the budget that did not clearly support the Commission's priorities of improving frontline capacity, modernizing the tools available to officers, and strengthening the community partnerships that provide a measurable return for the police service.

In total, $58 million of operating growth requests were not approved. These included approximately 300 new FTEs, including positions like additional mounted patrol officers, district front counter constables, specialized investigators (e.g., homicide and sex crimes detectives), maintenance tradespeople, crime prevention community educators, forensic accountants, communications staff, and administrative staff.

In addition to our annual strategic planning session, the Commission has spent approximately 60-90 minutes of every monthly regular meeting since September 2025 providing strategic direction and approvals as part of the Service's budget development process to ensure we present Council with a prudent and necessary growth request.

Minimum Police Funding

Section 27(1) of Alberta's *Police Act* requires municipal councils to maintain an "adequate and effective" police service under the supervision of a police commission. The *Alberta Provincial Policing Standards* define this term further by stating that, "[a] police service will be deemed adequate and effective if the legislative requirements and policing standards are met." The standards further add that indicators of adequacy and effectiveness can include, "legal requirements, compliance with standards, efficiency (e.g. cost/benefit per unit of service) and timeliness."

Council asked the Commission to provide both a baseline and growth request number as part of the budgeting process. The Commission's position is that maintaining current baseline funding (even adjusted each year for inflation) is not an option as the Service is already showing signs of not being able to provide adequate and effective policing.

While cracks are forming across the Service, here are some examples of what has led to the Commission's position that existing 2026 resourcing is not adequate:

- The *Alberta Provincial Policing Standards* require that frontline officers engage in a variety of activities, including crime prevention, community engagement, traffic enforcement, investigations, and preventative patrolling. Currently, over 80% of frontline officers' time is spent just responding to calls, rather than on these.

- Frontline teams are regularly using overtime and callout to maintain a minimum 60% staffing level target for each shift. Accommodations, medical leaves, and employee retention challenges are all contributing to this issue and overtime is not a cost-effective or sustainable strategy to ensure sufficient staffing each shift.

- The *Alberta Provincial Policing Standards* require that police-controlled property be maintained in a state of operational readiness. Deferred maintenance has put critical

infrastructure at risk by not replacing HVAC units, roofs, electrical systems and vehicles at the end of their lifecycles. Currently, there are police facilities that require buckets in the hallways when it rains because of leaky roofs, and patrol teams are regularly short vehicles because they are out of service for repairs.

- When urgent call volumes outstrip frontline capacity, the Service goes into differential response. This means officers from across the city must be pulled from their core duties and deployed elsewhere to handle emergency calls (similar to an EMS "Code Red"). During this period, police may stop responding to non-emergency calls altogether. The Service has doubled its differential response incidents from 10 in 2024 to 21 in 2025. This year, differential responses are on track to surpass 2025.

- Alberta's *Access to Information Act* requires access to information requests from the public to be fulfilled within 30 days, unless exceptional circumstances warrant an extension. The Service is currently only completing 10.7% of these requests within the legislated 30-day response deadline. While staffing in this area has been increased this year, it is still indicative of civilian resourcing challenges.

As stated in our July 13 memorandum, our Commission believes that a return to the 2023 ratio of police officers per 100,000 Calgarians (requiring 275 new officers) would be the minimum required to ensure adequate policing into the future. An additional 191 civilian technical experts and support staff are also needed to ensure officers have the supports they need to do their jobs. Significant portions of the capital budget are maintenance and replacement costs to ensure the reliability of critical infrastructure after key maintenance has been deferred over multiple budget cycles.

Additional Service Levels

The *Alberta Provincial Policing Standards* and *Alberta Policing Oversight Standards* both allow for municipalities to provide a level of policing over and above the "adequate and effective" minimum, provided additional services are equitably provided to the whole community and delivered efficiently.

The Commission's annual community surveys and community engagement has shown over and over that Calgarians expect additional policing services like School Resource Officers, Diversity Resource Teams, and teams that support interventions in the lives of youth and other people in crisis. It is this public input that is driving a budget request of a total 309 net new officers, rather than just the 275 adequacy minimum.

The additional services provided by the police must be determined collaboratively by Council and the Commission. Under the *Police Act,* Council ultimately decides how much

Calgarians will pay for policing overall, but it is the Commission who decides through its budget allocation what services above the adequacy requirements that funding will be used to provide.

Civilian Technical Experts and Support Staff

The proposed 2027-2030 police budget includes both police officers and 214.5 net new civilian FTEs. The vast majority of these positions support database management (entering reports/warrants, searching records for officers, etc.), evidence disclosure, connecting people in crisis to social services, IT maintenance and transformation (such as artificial intelligence adoption), and crime analysis to connect trends and identify suspects. These positions provide a direct benefit to frontline policing by providing tools to improve efficiency and by completing tasks officers would otherwise have to do.

Around 15% of the new positions will support employee recruiting and training, employee retention, and returning employees to work after a medical leave or accommodation. These are needed to both help address the current number of officers on leave and accommodation, and to hire and train the new officers being requested.

Around 9% are corporate supports, such as accountants, lawyers, payroll staff, business strategists and communications staff. Another 9% are tradespeople and other asset management professionals to ensure police infrastructure is adequately maintained.

Calgary Police Commission Budget

Questions were asked about the Calgary Police Commission budget. To protect the Commission's independence, it has an independent secretariat to support the board with its duties. A small portion of the overall police budget is allocated to its operation.

The budget for the Commission's operations has been unchanged for the last two budget cycles at $1.39 million. This has supported 4.6 FTEs, an office lease, Commissioner honorariums, a small community engagement event, staff and Commissioner training, an annual community and employee survey, the Service's external financial audit, and any other external consultants (including legal counsel).

Over the past few years, the Commission has been trying to enhance its governance practices while also absorbing inflation costs. At the beginning of 2025, the board decided to transfer the Service's internal audit function to the Commission staff team to transition to a model like the City Auditor's office. An independent governance and policy analyst was also added to the team. Over the next budget cycle, the Commission would like to hire

three additional internal auditors, bringing us in line with other policing organizations, and one financial analyst to support our budget oversight.

In total, staffing growth, increased honorarium costs, and increased funding for outside consultants and public engagement bring the proposed 2027-2030 budget to $3.19 million per year (of which $1.3 million is net growth). The increased budget aligns with other major cities and addresses several police governance challenges recently identified by the province's judicial review of the Edmonton Police Commission.

Outcomes of 2027-2030 Proposed Police Budget

The Commission has approved 10 key performance measures for the Service, the first three of which will be reported quarterly to Council:

1. **Proactive Policing Time:** By 2030, proactive policing time will have increased by 14%. This means each frontline officer, on average, will have an additional hour and a half each shift to proactively patrol, work with the community on crime prevention, conduct traffic stops, enforce court conditions of people released on bail, monitor prolific offenders, and proactively find and address disorder. Without a significant increase to proactive policing time, Calgarians will experience the same level of police visibility, crime prevention, and responsiveness as now.

2. **Weighted Clearance Rate:** Calgary has an above average case clearance rate compared to other major Canadian cities, despite having a significantly lower-than-average officer to population ratio. Investments in new technologies, civilian investigative supports, and officer capacity will ensure the weighted case clearance rate remains strong and even improves despite lower-than-average staffing levels. Without these investments, the increasing complexity of crime and advances in criminals' use of technology is expected to erode the Service's ability to solve crimes over the next four years, reducing the weighted case clearance rate.

3. **Emergency Response Time:** Another benefit of increased proactive policing time is that more units are available at any given time to respond to emergencies. The Service's average emergency response time target used to be 7 minutes, but response times have slowly been worsening since 2022 and now sit above 13 minutes on average. Staffing growth will allow the police to consistently get to emergencies within 12 minutes or less. New technologies like drone as a first responder also support quicker response times by getting eyes on an incident in progress sooner so that tactical decisions can be made and offenders can be located before officers on the ground arrive. Without significant growth in frontline staffing, response times are projected to continue getting worse as Calgary grows.

4. **Crime Severity Index:** Increased proactive capacity and investigative technologies are expected to further reduce Calgary's overall crime severity index, which measures both the frequency and seriousness of crime.

5. **Community Perception of Safety:** More police visibility and proactiveness is aiming to increase the number of respondents who characterize Calgary as safe in annual community surveys from 75% to over 80%.

6. **Social Disorder Rate:** Proactive work to address social disorder and enhance community partnerships are expected to reduce the number of calls reporting social disorder below the current three year average.

7. **Traffic Safety:** The exact metric is still being refined, but the Service and Commission are likely to use a city-wide reduction in average speed as a measure of traffic enforcement effectiveness.

8. **Employee Engagement Index:** Improved staffing will improve employee engagement and retention, with the aim of increasing employees who report high or moderate engagement from 59% to 65%.

9. **Partnership Evaluation:** A framework is under development to measure the effectiveness of police partnerships with other agencies in the community.

10. **Budget and Business Plan Performance:** The Service is expected to fully spend their budget (with the exception of any reserve contingency) and achieve at least 85% of their annual business plan deliverables.

CONCLUSION

Our Commission hopes the above information is helpful and addresses the questions that were not clearly answered at the July 28, 2026, Council meeting. We have also included a more detailed breakdown of the growth request as an appendix to this memo to increase your insight into the police budget.

We are grateful for our strong working relationship with Council and look forward to discussing the police budget with you further as we approach November.

APPENDIX 1 – DETAILED POLICING BUDGET GROWTH BREAKDOWN (IN $ MILLIONS)

Request	CPC Granular Format 1	CPC Granular Format 2	Sum of 2027	Sum of 2028	Sum of 2029	Sum of 2030	Sum of TOTAL
Capital	Capital	Communications	4.7	5.8	4.1	4.8	19.3
		Computers/IT	12.9	7.1	7.1	7.0	34.1
		Equipment	3.9	2.3	2.8	3.1	12.1
		Equipment - Helicopter	1.7	-	-	-	1.7
		Infrastructure	20.2	18.9	11.0	4.3	54.4
		Vehicles	16.0	17.6	18.4	18.4	70.3
	Capital Total		**59.4**	**51.7**	**43.4**	**37.5**	**191.9**
Capital Total			**59.4**	**51.7**	**43.4**	**37.5**	**191.9**
Operating	Salaries and Wages	Salaries and Wages	20.0	19.6	16.1	16.3	72.0
	Salaries and Wages Total		**20.0**	**19.6**	**16.1**	**16.3**	**72.0**
	Business Expenses	Advertising, Promotion, Rewards, Recognition	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
		Business Expenses	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7
		Contracted Services	0.0	0.4	-	-	0.4
		Legal	0.2	0.2	-	-	0.4
		Training	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
	Business Expenses Total		**4.2**	**0.6**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**4.8**
	Communication Services	Communications	2.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	4.2
	Communication Services Total		**2.9**	**0.4**	**0.4**	**0.4**	**4.2**
	Contracted Services	Contracted Services	1.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	1.4
		Health Services	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	1.3
	Contracted Services Total		**1.4**	**0.4**	**0.5**	**0.5**	**2.7**
	Insurance and Security	Insurance	1.0	0.3	0.4	0.4	2.1
		Security	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.4
	Insurance and Security Total		**1.8**	**0.5**	**0.6**	**0.6**	**3.5**
	Maintenance and Rental of	Aircraft	-	-	0.2	-	0.2
		Infrastructure	2.4	0.1	-	-	2.5
		Software/Hardware	4.0	2.3	2.8	1.3	10.4
	Maintenance and Rental of Equipment and Buildings Total		**6.4**	**2.3**	**3.0**	**1.3**	**13.1**
	Materials and Supplies	Drone & Related	1.4	0.0	-	-	1.4
		Equipment	1.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.5
		Fuel & Oil	1.6	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.2
		Helicopter & Related	2.3	3.2	1.7	0.1	7.3
		Program Supplies	2.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	2.5
		Software/Hardware	8.7	1.8	0.6	0.6	11.7
		Uniforms/Duty Gear/Clothing	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	1.2
	Materials and Supplies Total		**18.3**	**5.7**	**2.6**	**1.2**	**27.9**
	Vehicle Operation	Fleet	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	1.9
	Vehicle Operation Total		**1.2**	**0.2**	**0.2**	**0.3**	**1.9**
	Operating Inflation	Operating Inflation	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.7	2.2
	Operating Inflation Total		**0.4**	**0.5**	**0.7**	**0.7**	**2.2**
Operating Total			**56.6**	**30.3**	**24.0**	**21.2**	**132.2**
Grand Total			**116.0**	**82.0**	**67.4**	**58.7**	**324.1**