

HALTON POLICE PROPOSING \$186M BUDGET FOR 2023

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The Halton police are planning to ask the region for an increased budget of \$186 million for 2023, up from \$175.9 million in 2022.

The budget, which must still be approved by the Halton Police Board and the Halton Region, would represent a 5.7 per cent increase from the previous budget.

Of that proposed increase, 2.1 per cent was attributed to compensation, 1.3 per cent to staffing increase costs, 0.7 per cent to benefits, 0.3 per cent to technology costs, 0.3 per cent to "all other costs," 0.6 per cent to the new Halton Hills police station, and 0.4 per cent to cybersecurity costs.

The matter was briefly discussed during a meeting of the Halton Police Board on Nov. 10; however,

as the board members had been given little time to review budget documents, they voted to defer consideration to a future meeting.

Board member Curt Allen called on police to emphasize in their budget presentation how the increase they are requesting is going to address the board's priorities around crime.

Halton police Chief Stephen Tanner noted in a report to the board that when growth projections are taken into account, the 2023 funding request actually represents an increase of four per cent when compared to the 2022 budget.

He said significant drivers impacting the 2023 budget include:

- Staffing needs to maintain focus on front-line policing service levels and programs while re-

flecting emerging trends and continued growth in demand for policing services.

- Upcoming contract negotiations.

- Increased fuel costs and increased construction costs for the new Halton Hills police station due to inflation.

- Enhanced cybersecurity investment.

"We are continuously aware of the board's objective to demonstrate prudent use of taxpayer dollars while recognizing the need to provide adequate and effective police services for Halton region," said Tanner in the report.

"The challenge for the board and management remains in balancing the need to service an ever-growing community and to respond to changes in service delivery and emerging trends, while maintaining a fiscally re-



Graham Paine/Metroland

Halton police chief Stephen Tanner has set out next year's police budget.

sponsible request for resources and funding. We believe that the 2023 fund-

ing request achieves this balance."

The police service is

proposing to add 20 sworn officer positions and five civilian positions in the coming year.

They also want to convert one part-time civilian position to full time.

While a 2021 Statistics Canada report found Halton continues to be one of the safest communities in Canada, police reported a 30.5 per cent increase in Halton's crime rate during the first six months of 2022.

Much of that increase was chalked up to crime returning to pre-pandemic levels; however, Tanner acknowledged some crimes such as robberies, sexual assaults, extortion and vehicle thefts are occurring more frequently.

The next Halton Police Board meeting is scheduled for Dec. 22; however, board chair Jeff Knoll noted an earlier meeting could be called to discuss the budget if needed.

The police budget is not expected to come before the region for approval until January.

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	3	2	4	5	6
	→	1	2	3	9
5	1	3	8	5	4
4	9	5	7	6	5
7	11	9	8	17	13
8	12	10	9	14	16
18	14	11	10	19	13
16	13	12	17	18	
15	14	15	16	→	

Math Maze

Going from 1 to 18 in order, find your way through the maze to the end.

Happy Holidays