



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Police Service: Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program Grant Amending Agreement

Date:	June 9, 2016
To:	Executive Committee, City of Toronto
From:	Andrew Pringle, Chair, Toronto Police Services Board

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request the City's Executive Committee to submit a recommendation to Toronto City Council to authorize the City of Toronto to enter into an Amending Agreement to the Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program Agreement between the Province of Ontario (Province), the City of Toronto and the Toronto Police Services Board. This Amending Agreement was received on April 18, 2016, and amends the current Agreement, which expired on March 31, 2016, extending the term of the Agreement for a period of one year – April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

Under the Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program, the Toronto Police Service (Service) may receive grant funding of up to \$8.75 million annually to cover a portion (\$35,000 per officer) of the salaries and benefits of up to 250 officers. Although the program has been on-going, a formal agreement is entered into every two years. This year, the Province has provided a commitment for a one-year agreement only, with no further commitment for funding under the program at this time.

Revenue is built into the Service budget each year for this grant program. In order to maximize the amount of funding received under the grant, the Service must maintain its uniform staffing levels at a predetermined benchmark of at least 5,510 officers. Due to declining numbers of uniform officers, with few or no replacements being made, the Service no longer meets the requirements to obtain full funding under the grant. With further separations of uniform members anticipated, and no plans to hire further uniform recruits in 2016, it is expected that the claim for period of the Amending Agreement will be less than half of the \$8.75M funding available (amount claimed will vary depending on the number of uniform separations). However, discussions are ongoing with the Province to negotiate changes to the terms and conditions of the Agreement that would allow the Service to maximize the claim under the grant program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On behalf of the Toronto Police Services Board, the Chair of the Board, Andrew Pringle, recommends that:

Toronto City Council authorize the City of Toronto to sign the Amending Agreement to the Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program Agreement with the Province and the Toronto Police Services Board, subject to approval as to form by the City Solicitor.

Implementation Points

The Province requires that both the Toronto Police Services Board and the City of Toronto sign the Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program Amending Agreement. Once City Council authorization has been obtained, the Toronto Police Service will arrange for the appropriate City officials to sign the Amending Agreement.

Financial Impact

The Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program has been an on-going program, and grant funding of up to \$8.75 million has been included annually as revenue in the Service's Operating Budget. The grant revenue is tied to uniform staffing levels. As these staffing levels were projected to decline below the grant's threshold for full funding in 2016, a 2016 revenue budget of \$7.7M was established for the grant, resulting in a \$1M estimated loss in grant funding in the Service's 2016 operating budget. Early in 2016, after approval of the 2016 Operating Budget, the Service altered its hiring plans for the year and reduced the planned number of uniform hires of 146, down to only 15 hires. This was done to help the Service contain the cost of policing services in 2017 and moving forward. As a result, the Service will fall well below the threshold to maintain full grant funding over the term of the Amending Agreement. Based on current projections, the Service will be eligible to claim only approximately \$3.5M to \$4M of the full \$8.75M in funding available from the grant. This is based on a projected uniform staffing level of 5,247 officers by the end of the grant term – March 31, 2017. Figures may vary, depending on the actual number of uniform separations that occur in the year. To help to alleviate the loss of the grant funds, the Service and the Province are currently discussing possible changes to the Agreement that would allow the Service to make a greater grant claim and reduce the loss. Any such changes to the Agreement would be reviewed for approval as to form by the City Solicitor.

Entering into the Amending Agreement with the Province in respect of the Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program will have no further financial implications or impact. However, failing to enter into the Agreement would result in a loss of revenue of \$3.5M to \$4M (and potentially up to \$8.75M) for the Board and the City with respect to the officer salaries that are partially funded through the grant program.

The Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program Amending Agreement with the Province does not commit the City to any additional expenditures.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program is a cost-sharing arrangement between the Province of Ontario and various municipalities. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services introduced the Program in 2005 to assist municipalities to enhance community policing and the six targeted areas identified by the government in its fight against crime in Ontario: youth crime, guns and gangs, organized crime and marijuana grow ops, dangerous offenders, domestic violence, and protecting children from internet luring and child pornography.

The Province committed to pay up to 50% of all salary and benefits costs of allocated uniform hires, to a maximum of \$35,000 per officer per year. Police Services were required to maintain a minimum uniform staffing level equal to the Program benchmark (actual uniform staffing level reported at October 23, 2003), plus additional officers to be subsidized by the grant.

The Service was allocated 250 officers to be funded by the Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program, and is required to maintain a minimum uniform strength of 5,510 officers (Program benchmark of 5,260 officers and 250 additional officers) to receive the full amount of funding offered under the program. Due to ongoing budget constraints, the Service has been replacing fewer uniform officers than those that leave. This has resulted in uniform strength falling below the minimum uniform staffing level required to claim full grant funding.

The Amending Agreement provides that the Province will continue to share the salary and benefit costs for up to 250 police officers above the Program benchmark identified above. Based on current staffing levels, and the current salary and benefit costs of these officers, it is expected that the Service may claim \$3.5M to \$4M in grant funds under the program for the term of the Agreement. This is approximately \$5M below the maximum available under this grant program.

The Province requires that both the Toronto Police Services Board and the City of Toronto sign the Amending Agreement. It is therefore necessary that Council authorise the appropriate City officials to sign all documents related to the Program and the Agreement on behalf of the City of Toronto.

COMMENTS

The Safer Communities – 1,000 Officers Partnership Program Amending Agreement contains terms and conditions substantially similar to those contained in the previous Agreement with the Province. This Amending Agreement, or a similar revised version after any changes agreed to by the Province to maximize the amount of revenue received

under this grant, will be reviewed and approved as to form by the City Solicitor prior to its execution.

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SIGNATURE

Andrew Pringle
Chair

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