

**REPORT FOR ACTION****Initiative to reduce the number of unwanted firearms in Toronto**

Date: April 26, 2019
To: Executive Committee
From: Executive Director, Social Development Finance and Administration
Wards: All

SUMMARY

The Toronto Police Service and City of Toronto identified an immediate opportunity to undertake a gun buyback to reduce the presence of unwanted firearms in Toronto. Authority to provide funding to the Toronto Police Service to administer the initiative is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development Finance and Administration recommends that:

1. Council authorize a \$750,000 gross and net increase to the Toronto Police Service's 2019 Council approved operating budget, funded from the 2019 non-program expenditure budget, to provide one-time funding of up to the same amount for a gun buyback initiative.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

\$750,000 of one-time funding is available in the 2019 non-program expenditure budget to support the gun buyback initiative administered by the Toronto Police Service in 2019.

This one-time funding will cover the cost of compensation to the public (inclusive of charges for the pre-paid bank cards), and up to a maximum of \$50,000.00 for other costs such as transport and processing the collected firearms, destruction costs, publicity and other costs necessary to administer the initiative.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact statement.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of June 28, 2016, in consideration of EX16.48: Gun Amnesty/Buyback Program, Executive Committee referred the item to the City Manager for report back to the Committee.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX16.48>

At its meeting of July 23, 2018, Council considered a report on immediate steps to address gun violence and directed staff to establish a gun amnesty/buyback program in consultation with the Toronto Police Services Board, and report back to Council on the implementation of the program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.CC44.14>

Equity Impact Statement:

The gun buy-back initiative has been analysed at the execution and implementation stage for potential impacts on equity seeking groups and vulnerable Torontonians. Women's, low income residents, racialized residents, and Youth's safety and security will be positively impacted.

COMMENTS

The gun buyback is an anti-violence initiative that will aid Toronto Police Service efforts to reduce the number of unwanted firearms and therefore the number of firearms at risk of diversion to illegal gun and gang-related activity. Every firearm is potentially a crime gun, fewer firearms on the streets of Toronto will assist in preventing gun related incidents.

How the Gun Buyback Initiative works:

The gun buyback initiative is administered by the Toronto Police Service. Torontonians in possession of unwanted unregistered and registered firearms are encouraged to contact the non-emergency number to arrange for an officer to retrieve the firearm. Depending on the number of individuals participating in the program, there may be a delay in retrieval, in which case the individual will be advised and requested to keep the firearm secured.

Once the firearm has been surrendered to police, the owner/claimant is issued a property receipt. Firearms are documented, recorded on a data base and examined to determine if they were used in the commission of a crime. Toronto Police Service is responsible for facilitating the destruction of the firearms.

Upon determination that the firearm was not used in the commission of crime, Toronto Police Service will forward the buyback amount, in the form of a pre-paid bank card, to the individual who turned it in. The proposed buyback values will range from \$100 to \$350 with handguns receiving a higher incentive.

This initiative will be available to City of Toronto residents only.

Conclusion:

The buyback initiative facilitates the removal of unwanted firearms from the public and promotes active public involvement in community safety. It also provides an opportunity to communicate a number of public safety messages in relation to firearm ownership and community safety in general.

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SIGNATURE

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